

Elm Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Elm Parish Council held at the Portacabin, Begdale, Elm on Wednesday 8th July 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), Lee, Cage, Pigden, Hopkin, Fisher, Goodley.

District Cllr Roy, Mrs S England – Clerk (minute taker), 1 member of the public.

- 47.26 **Apologies for absence** – Received from; Cllrs Milham, Pilbeam & Welbourne. Council resolved to accept their reasons for absence.
- 48.26 **Members Code of Conduct** – The Chair reminded members of the need to submit; via the Clerk; any changes to their Register of Interests information.
- 49.26 **To receive declarations of interests (pecuniary, non-pecuniary & other) and any requests for dispensation.**
Cllr Ferguson declared an interest in agenda item 16 (Min. ref.61.26) due to a professional interest.
- 50.26 **Open Forum** – 1 member of the public spoke. The following matter was raised;
1. Thanks to the PC for arranging cleaning of Coldham bus shelter and grit bin.
2. Thanks to the County Council for patching repairs on the highway surface at Redmoor Bank and Redmoor Lane.
- 51.26 **Signing of Minutes** – Council resolved to approve the minutes of meeting held 10th June 2026 as a true record of proceedings. P. Cllr Cage , S. Cllr Lee. Resolved unanimously.
- 52.26 **Police matters** - NTR
- 53.26 **District Councillor's Report** - District Cllr Roy's Report had been circulated prior to the meeting advising the following;
1. The Peterborough and Cambridge Combined Authority was carrying out a public engagement exercise from 16 June to 28 July 2026 regarding Tiger Bus Routes. All encouraged to engage.
2. Gosmoor Lane "Give Way" sign - confirmed that Highways did not have this on their asset register; now added. Connection is safe, sign to be replaced in the near future.
3. Gully cleaning due to take place in August - every gully from Friday Bridge Tower to Elm High Road should be included.
4. Half Penny House – Concerns raised reference boarded windows (possibly due to tree damage). FDC Conservation Officer and Enforcement working with owner in attempt to move situation forward.
5. Food waste caddies – launch date, 7 September 2026.
6. Flytipping – Cllr Roy had met with reps. from Environmental Services and other relevant parties to discuss how issue could be managed.
- 54.26 **To receive report from County Councillor** - Cllr Fisher reported;
1. New areas under LGR should be announced by 17th July 2026.
2. Cambs County Council had signed a new agreement specifically for repairs to peat soil affected roads. 12 month trial of the new method to be undertaken along the B1099.
- 55.26 **Clerk's Report** – The Clerk's Report had been circulated prior to the meeting, details as follows;
1. Due to new Section 32A of Localism Act 2011, a member's home address should not be disclosed on the authority's public register of interest. The Clerk sought clarification of members' preferences
2. **Capital Grant funding for hedge planting on Friday Bridge playing field / Tower Hall boundary** – In summary, quotes received ranged from; £2755 to £17,841 for planting 100m hedge. Maximum grant contribution was £13.25 per metre, i.e. total £1325. Planting the smallest whips (cheapest quote) would require a £1k top up and the plants would require significant TLC in order to establish density (6-7 years). Also, evidence of land ownership was problematic. *The Clerk advised to spend no further time on the matter; subject would not be carried forward to the September agenda.*
3. **Neighbourhood Plan (NP)** – Further to discussions at June meeting, costs relating to pursuing the creation of a NP fully managed by a specialist Planning Consultancy Firm (PCF) had been investigated. Firstly, this would still require the formation of a steering group 'the qualifying body' which should include at least two representatives from the Parish Council. The group would be responsible for decision making and feeding information/preferences to the PCF. Costs for a fully managed NP for a sizeable parish could easily be £70-£80k. A member of the FDC Planning Policy Team had also advised (in relation to which criteria an Elm NP should align with); *'it is quite difficult to provide definitive advice due to a number of current uncertainties'*, i.e. unknown specifics for Fenland 50 LP, effect of LGR etc. *Clerk advised not to undertake any further investigations, subject not to be carried forward.*
4. **Play area, West Drive, Friday Bridge** – a query had arisen concerning this site, a title search confirmed the area was owned by FDC.

5. **Parish Online mapping** – Council had registered for the system, Cllr Roy was set up as an administrator. After the first year the annual fee will be £280. Ultimately, assets could be mapped onto the system but once cemetery mapping on Scribe had been completed, (still approx. 1000 entries to upload).
6. **Flood Kit Equipment** – Cambs County Council advised parishes were able to apply for up to £1,000 of flood support equipment on a 'first come first served' basis. Order placed, including; water absorbing bags (modern style sandbags), first aid kits, torches, two-way radios, foil blankets, storage boxes etc.
7. **CCTV, Friday Bridge playing field** – subsidence at skate park and graffiti on equipment; Neill McCourt undertaking repairs. One quotation received for CCTV, awaiting further quote, to be included on September agenda.
8. **Elm Aveling FC** – The group leaders are very happy with the facilities but they were struggling with membership. Community engagement lacking despite their efforts.
9. **Grove Gardens ponds** – Further Water Safety RoSPA Report was due to take place on 7th July; Hoped that recommendations arising would be implemented this time.
10. **FEET** – Update received confirming that they have just four active members, they are happy to continue with cutting the grass in the wider area but there is no capacity for any additional tasks/work.
11. **Railings at Cemetery** – Backlog at contractor undertaking powder coating, Clerk's chasing every week, hoped that initial section could be re-fitted week ending 17th July.
12. **MVAS pole Coldham** – Pole may be too close to highway, matter under investigation.
13. **Thanks conveyed** – to Mr Terry Keeble for assisting the Clerks with a number of tasks; hugely appreciated.
14. **Warning signs at Towpath** – Clerks would be visiting Towpath to confirm installation location with sign contractor.
15. **Proposed development at Friday Bridge** – Agent acting on behalf of the developer requested a pre-application meeting. Agent was invited to July meeting but declined. Confirmed that they were welcome to attend future meetings.
16. **CiLCA hours** – Currently 74 staff hours spent on CiLCA, 40% of the work completed and submitted. Capacity to complete other tasks (e.g. Scribe) was restricted but essential statutory work was up to date.
17. **Cemetery working party** – Date needed to be re-scheduled, Clerks to advise in due course.
18. **Cemetery beams** – Quotes being sought for an additional two beams as limited availability for burial plots on South side.
19. **CCC grass cutting & weed control post LGR** – The County Council did not know what would happen to grass cutting contracts (for Elm) post LGR.
20. **Cemetery Cottage** – Grounds maintenance contractor had undertaken further clearance work in back garden of property.

56.26 Financial Matters

- i. The Clerk advised the following sums had been received since the last meeting;
FDC Concurrent Functions Grant £7837; Interest £273.86; Cemetery fees £690.
- ii. To resolve to approve expenditure for July 2026 as detailed below: Resolved; P. Cllr Fisher S. Cllr Lee.

PAYEE	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
Scottish Power	Cemetery Cottage power	£41.01	£2.06	£43.07
Optimum Clean	Coldham bus shelter	£95.00		£95.00
Pozative Energy	Portacabin electricity	£43.73	£2.19	£45.92
Fenland District Council	Cemetery bins	£101.52		£101.52
Tamar IT	Remote support	£18.00	£3.60	£21.60
Wisbech Carpet Warehouse	Cemetery Carpets	£545.00	£109.00	£654.00
Online Playgrounds	Fridaybridge upgrades	£25,905.38	£5,181.08	£31,086.46
Tawny Owl Services	Mesh fencing at Fridaybridge	£265.00	£53.00	£318.00
S Little	Elm planters - Grant	£52.00		£52.00
David Clark Builder	Cemetery cottage locks	£110.00		£110.00
Diamondbyte Solutions	Dell laptop (for Deputy Clerk)	£265.83	£53.17	£319.00
Griffin Electrical Services	Cemetery Cottage repairs	£830.00		£830.00
ICO	Subscription (Data Protection)	£47.00		£47.00
Wave	Cemetery water rates	£36.30		£36.30
Salaries	Clerk's & Deputy Clerk salary	£2,420.59		£2,420.59
Expenses	Clerk's & Deputy Clerk exps	£416.84	£24.65	£441.49
HMRC	PAYE M3	£636.56		£636.56

Nest	Pension contributions	£198.36		£198.36
Tawny Owl Services	Towpath/P Park maintenance	£87.75	£17.55	£105.30
FDC	Skip emptying, Cemetery	£67.68		£67.68
		£33,969.05	£5,803.40	£39,772.45

Chair

- iii. To resolve to appoint additional signatories to Council's signing mandate. It was resolved to appoint Cllrs Fisher and Pilbeam to the signing mandate. P-Cllr Cage, S-Cllr Lee.
- iv. To resolve on quotations received for CCTV at F. Bridge play area. Subject deferred to September pending receipt of second quote.
- v. To resolve to delegate authority to three Councillors for approving payments due in August. It was resolved to delegate authority to Cllrs Ferguson, Pigden & Milham. P-Cllr Fisher, S-Cllr Cage.
- vi. To resolve to approve content of quarterly Finance Report. Resolved to approve. P-Cllr Lee, S-Cllr Ferguson,
- vii. To resolve to approve content of quarterly Budget Update Report. Resolved to approve. P-Cllr Lee, S-Cllr Cage.

57.26 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 Lee provided details of Christmas decorations she had located on website. Subject to be c/f.
3. Emergency Plan WP – Cllr Pilbeam had attended meeting with reps. from Cambs & Peterborough Local Resilience Forum, he would seek further advice from them moving forward.
4. Street Pride – Statement received from Cllr Pilbeam – 29 bags of rubbish equating to 22 man hours had been collected. 8 incidents of fly tipping had been reported. Whitemill grant funds had been received.
5. White Mill Fund – Applications had been determined and funds distributed.
6. Medworth Fund (MVV) – Cllr Pilbeam advised that his application to be a member of the Panel had not been successful. Grants between £2k - £50k could be applied for, subject to criteria. District Cllr Roy confirmed that he would investigate who had been appointed to the Panel as it was important for parishes to be represented.

58.26 Planning:

- i. **F/YR26/0489/VOC** – Variation of conditions relating to vehicle access, materials, boundary, landscaping in relation to applications; F/YR25/0128/RM & F/YR21/1064/O. Land North of Rathbone, Atkinsons Lane, Elm. Council resolved that it had no comments to submit in relation to the proposals.
- ii. **F/YR26/0492/TRTPO** – Fell 1 x Lime tree (TPO 9/1968), Gemini House, 9 Gosmoor Lane, Elm. Council resolved to request details of the specialist person/contractor who had submitted the arboricultural report (recommending the felling) as it was currently 'anonymous'.

59.26 Highways & Footways;

- i. TTRO ref. 2026-20908 – Gully cleaning along Fridaybridge Road (partly completed).
- ii. To review information received reference 20mph zone, resolve appropriately – It was resolved to approve the plan agreed by CCC. P-Cllr Ferguson, S-Cllr Lee.
- iii. To receive update reference 26/27 LHI application (for weight restriction along Begdale Road & Redmoor), resolve appropriately – It was confirmed that the Clerks had attended a meeting with Highways' officers to discuss their Project Feasibility Summary. Unfortunately, the recommendation was for a 50mph speed limit to be implemented which Members felt did not address the issue of reducing HGV traffic along the route. It was resolved to withdraw the application highlighting the fact that; the recommendation to apply for a weight restriction; was received from a member of the CCC Highways Team. P-Cllr Ferguson, S-Cllr Fisher.

60.26 To confirm date / time for next Parish Council meeting –9th September 2026, 6.30pm.

61.26 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).
18.52 – It was resolved to enter closed session.

62.26 Cemetery Cottage Tenancy – to receive update; resolve appropriately. (Confidential due to personal/contractual information). – Cllr Ferguson confirmed her interest in the agenda item. An update was provided to members, it was resolved to approve acceptance of the new tenant. P-Cllr Cage, S-Cllr Lee. It was further resolved to delegate authority to

the Parish Clerk for signing the new tenancy agreement. P-Cllr Cage, S-Cllr Lee.

63.26 **Cemetery Chapel – To consider confidential matters – resolve appropriately** (Confidential due to contractual matters)
A draft rental agreement for storage at the Chapel had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was resolved to approve the Document. It was resolved for Clerk to sign on behalf of the Parish Council. P-Cllr Ferguson, S-Cllr Lee.

64.26 **To resolve to close the closed session.** 19.00 – It was resolved to close the closed session.

65.26 **Close of meeting.** 19.01 - It was resolved to close the meeting.

Signed
Elm Parish Council Chair

Date