

# ELM PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING

17 JANUARY 2017 – 7.00 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Pinnock, Chair; Councillors Mrs Cotterell, Mrs Dalliday, Miss Ferguson, Hopkin, Mrs Hopkin, Milham, Patrick, Stokes and Webb.

**Apologies:** Councillor Brand, Councillor Mrs Davis and District Councillor Tanfield.

**In attendance:** Mrs Claire Butcher. District Councillor Sutton (from 7.50 pm).

The minutes of the meeting of 13 December 2016 were confirmed and signed.

### **108/16 Members' Code of Conduct**

The Clerk reminded members of the need for them to submit to the Monitoring Officer at Fenland District Council, via the Parish Clerk, any changes to the content of their Register of Member Interests forms.

Members decided the reminder from the Clerk be noted and acted upon.

### **109/16 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting**

Members received a presentation from Rebecca Robinett, Fenland District Council's Street Pride Co- Ordinator, regarding Street Pride in general and the desire of an Elm resident to set up such a group in Elm.

Members thanked Mrs Robinett and confirmed the Council's support for the project.

#### **(1) Play equipment provision in Fridaybridge (minute 92/16 (1))**

The Clerk informed members that he had now been advised that the proposed funding stream from WREN was restricted to a cap of £50,000. This resulted in a shortfall in the required project funding of an amount of around £15,500. He reminded Members that this was a community project and that the Council was committed to a contribution of £7,500 only.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that District Councillor Tanfield be requested for information as to how the scheme is to be progressed.

#### **(2) Speeding across the parish (minute 92/16 (2))**

Councillor Pinnock advised Members that due to weather conditions, no Speedwatch sessions had taken place

Further to Minute 92/16 (2), Councillor Pinnock confirmed that he had circulated to Members a response he had received from the Constabulary regarding its reluctance to approve a reduction in the speed limit from 40mph to 30 mph on the B1101 between Elm and Friday Bridge  
He was pleased to note that the Constabulary acknowledged that it was a consultee only and confirmed that the matter of the 30mph would be pursued

Also in Minute 92/16 (2) reference had been made to the update of the Speedwatch Guidance. Councillor Pinnock advised that the Constabulary had confirmed that this should be available by the end of January. He would keep members advised

**(3) & (4) Local Highway Improvements scheme 2016/17 and 2017/18 (Minute 92/16 (3) and (4))**

Councillor Pinnock advised that no update was available as Mr Pickering, the Project Manager within the County Council's Highways Service had been away on holiday. An update would be obtained from him upon his return

**(5) Former Cemetery Chapel, Elm (minute 100/16)**

Councillor Pinnock advised that he had met with the tenants of the cemetery cottage who had organised the Christmas lighting in aid of the Wisbech & District Stroke Club and the High Dependency Unit at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn. They confirmed that the display had drawn many visitors to Elm and that £1,621.99 had been raised to be shared equally between the two charities. Additionally, £100 had been donated to the Elm Village Store following the armed robbery at the shop.

As previously advised to Members, the tenants were willing to continue with organising Christmas lights and to improve upon the first years' display. He advised Members that he was fully supportive of the scheme and proposed that:

- a) A group be formed to organise and run the lights and any other community events (such as a Summer Fayre, car boot sales), this group to comprise the two tenants, Elm Parish Council representative(s) and any interested parties
- b) The group be called "Elm Parish Community Hub"
- c) The tenants would buy and own the lights and decorations displayed within the cemetery boundary
- d) Elm Parish Council would spend up to £5,000 in the first year to buy (and retain ownership of) lights and decorations for use outside the cemetery
- e) Councillor Pinnock said that this contribution could be taken from the Council's General Reserve

Several Members considered that there might be health and safety issues and problems with parking. The proposal was not supported but it was agreed that Councillor Stokes meet with the tenants and report back at the next meeting

**(6) Appointment of New Clerk to the Council (minute 104/16)**

The Clerk confirmed that his replacement had been appointed as a result of interviews which took place on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017. He introduced the new Clerk (Mrs Claire Butcher) to the Members and reported that she was due to start after the meeting concluded.

It was agreed that the Council would agree to fund the new Clerk's Membership of SLCC and the purchase of a new version of Local Council Administration by Charles Arnold-Baker

## 110/16 Police matters

No member of the Wisbech and District Neighbourhood Policing Team was present at the meeting, and members were informed that PCSO Sue Clarke is off sick currently. No report was received prior to the meeting.

## 111/16 Planning Applications

Members considered the following planning applications and decided to submit to the Local Planning Authority the comments set out (in italics) below:

- (1) Erection of a two-storey side extension, a single-storey rear extension, a porch and a walkout bay window to front and erection of a front boundary wall with 1.2 metres high (max. height) brick piers to existing dwelling, involving the demolition of existing garage, at 2 Peartree Way, Elm – F/YR16/1103/F (applicant: Mr B Pearl).

***Resolved: That the application be supported***

- (2) Reserved Matters application relating to the detailed matters of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline planning permission F/YR14/0734/O for the erection of a two-storey 5-bed dwelling with integral garage on land north of Rosedale, Needham Bank, fronting Bar Drove, Fridaybridge – F/YR16/1109/RM (applicant: Mr D Johnson).

***Resolved: That the application be supported***

- (3) Erection of a two-storey 3-bed dwelling, involving demolition of lean-to extension to Carnaby House, on land north of Carnaby House, Back Road, Elm – F/YR16/1115/F (applicant: Mr P Millington).

***Resolved: That the application be supported***

- (4) Erection of a two-storey 5-bed dwelling with attached double garage, involving formation of pedestrian footway and associated highway works at plot 1, land west of Appletree House, Begdale Road, Elm – F/YR16/1125/F (applicant: Mr K Frusher).

***Resolved: That the application be supported***

- (5) Erection of a two-storey rear extension to existing dwelling, involving the demolition of existing extension, at Holly Cottage, 27 Gosmoor Lane, Elm – F/YR16/1130/F (applicants: Mr and Mrs N Townsend).

***Resolved: That the application be supported.***

- (6) Erection of a two-storey side extension and porch to front of existing dwelling, involving demolition of kitchen and garage, at 31 Church Road, Fridaybridge – F/YR16/1133/F (applicant: Mr Richard Dodkin).

***Resolved: That the application be supported***

- (7) Variation of condition 15 (imposition of a condition listing approved plans) in relation to Site Plan 4894-PL01 of planning permission F/YR14/0186/F (Erection of 3 x two-storey 4-bed dwellings with attached garages involving demolition of existing sheds) to enable revised access road conditions on land south and east of Meadowcourt, Main Road, Elm – F/YR16/1136/F (applicant: Mr Jonathan Boyall).

**Resolved: That the application be supported**

- (8) Erection of a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling at Forties Farm, Laddus Drove, Friday Bridge – F/YR16/1140/F (applicants: Mr and Mrs C Robinson).

**Resolved: That the application be supported**

- (9) Alterations to structures and infrastructure ancillary to existing pump (to enable the replacement of existing pump) at Pump at land north of Poplar Tree Farm, Wisbech Road, Coates – F/YR16/1182/F (applicant: March Farmers Washlands Ltd).

**Resolved: That the application be supported**

In addition, to consider a pre-application consultation in respect of a proposal to erect a dwelling at Limes Avenue, Elm.

**Resolved: That the application NOT be supported. Not being in keeping with the current street scene and could set an unwelcome precedent for future applications.**

### 112/16 (1) Financial Matters

The Clerk reported on the Parish Council's income and expenditure since the last meeting, as follows:

#### Income

Maxey Grounds	Cottage rent (less fees)	£523.60
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>£523.60</b>

#### Expenditure

R J Warren Ltd	Grounds maintenance contract (includes VAT of £263.58)	£1,581.47
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £244.46 and NI of £66.03) and reimbursement of expenses	£1,060.23
C Brennan	Playing field security (quarterly payment to 31 December 2016)	£100.00
Wisbech & District Stroke Club	Financial Assistance	£200.00
Johnston Publishing	Advertisement for Clerk vacancy (includes VAT of £26.00)	£156.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>£3,097.70</b>

In addition, the Clerk reported on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 (in the total sum of £168,639.92), together with the figure of £120,487.36 as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

### 112/16(2) Quarter 3 Report

The Report previously circulated was considered and accepted by the Council

### 112/16(3) Internal Auditor

The Clerk reported that the internal auditor was unable to act for the Council at the forthcoming year end and that a replacement was required

The Clerk was asked if he would be willing and able to act as he would no longer have any association with the Council. He stated that he would be willing to accept the appointment and it was agreed that enquiries be made regarding the appointment and if deemed permissible, Mr Jordan be offered the position

### 112/16(4) Parish Precept 2017/18

Members considered the level of Parish Precept for the financial year 2017/18

The Clerk presented a detailed report on the Parish Council's income and expenditure for 2015/16 and as at 31 December 2016, the financial position as at that date, estimates of income and expenditure for 2017/18 and various notes to aid members' deliberations regarding the level of Parish Precept to be set, including the facts that:-

- **The difference between the estimated expenditure and estimated income for 2017/18 is £44,936.00.** If the council were to set a precept of £44,936.00, this would equate to a charge of £39.49 per Band D (of Council Tax) equivalent property in the parish (compared to £44.00 in the current financial year).
- **Elm Parish Council Precept for 2016/17 is £49,150.00**
- **The level of Council Tax Support Grant which has been allocated by Fenland District Council to Elm Parish Council for 2017/18 is £2,293.00** (a reduction from £3,439.00 in 2016/17). This figure will reduce to £1,146.00 in 2018/19 and cease in 2019/20.
- Parish Council was awarded a Concurrent Functions Grant by Fenland District Council of 5,293.00 in 2015/16. **The estimated receipts figures above show Concurrent Functions Grant income from Fenland District Council (FDC) at the same level as that paid in the current financial year (FDC has confirmed that this will be the case).**
- The estimated receipts figures assume full occupancy of both Cemetery Cottage and the allotments.
- The Section 137 figure is based upon average spending during recent financial years. However, guidance states that it is not necessary for a local council to set a specific annual budget figure for such payments, as Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows a local council to spend under this provision (which can be summarised as funding items of community benefit where no specific power exists) at a rate currently of £7.42 per elector. In the case of Elm parish, that would be approximately £23,560 in 2017/18.
- Payments estimate in relation to Cemetery Cottage is a mainly a contingency item. It is anticipated that spend should continue to be minimal following renovation works in early 2011.
- Allotment rents are set to increase, from £100 to £125 per acre with effect from October 2017; the opportunity does not exist to increase these rents again until October 2020, provided that notice is given no later than October 2019. The increased level of rent is included in the estimates of income for 2017/18.
- There is the opportunity to increase burial fees with effect from 1 April 2017; these were, however, increased on 1 April 2016 and income in 2016/17 will exceed the estimate for that financial year.

- According to the Practitioners' Guide to Local Council Governance, it is recommended that a local council should possess, as general reserves, a sum equating to three to twelve months of its gross expenditure; in the case of Elm Parish Council, that would be a sum (in addition to any ear-marked reserves) of between £15,000 and £55,000 (based upon recent average annual expenditure). **It is estimated that the level of general reserves at the end of the 2015/16 financial year will be of the order of £50,000.**
- In accordance with minute 98/15, provision has been made in the 2017/18 estimates of expenditure for a further one-third of the anticipated costs of replacing the Category 2 street lights (i.e. £31,000) within the parish. The council already possesses an ear-marked reserve totalling £62,000 for the other two-thirds of the anticipated cost of these works.

**It is recommended that Elm Parish Council approves the estimates for 2017/18 and agrees a Precept for that financial year.**

Members decided

- (1) that the income of £3,163.60 be noted and that the expenditure of £3,097.70 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 and the position as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 be noted;
- (3) to note that, after allowing for the Parish Council's ear-marked reserves (totalling £93,595.00) at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016, the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 (making further allowance for a general contingency of £55,000) reduces the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 to approximately 20,245.00;
- (4) Members agreed to set a Parish Precept for 2017/2018 of £52,936

### **113/16 Reports from District and County Councillors**

Given the absence of the County Councillor who represents the parish of Elm (Gordan Gillick), no report was received by the Parish Council in relation to current County Council issues.

Councillor Michelle Tanfield notified the Clerk that she currently had no issues to bring to the attention of the Parish Council at this time.

Councillor Will Sutton confirmed the following:-

- Fly Tipping had been removed from Graysmoor Drove and Station Road.
- The necessary signing of the Section 106 Planning Obligation in relation to Grove Gardens had been signed by the appropriate representatives of Cambridgeshire County Council, Fenland District Council and the landowner.
- 6600 households had signed up for the new Fenland District Council Brown Bin Recycling scheme prior to the discount cut-off date and a further 1000 households had signed up to the scheme since the deadline.

Councillor Sutton thanked Mr Jordan for all his help over the preceding years and commented that the new Clerk had big boots to fill.

### 114/16 Open Spaces

Nothing further to discuss at this time.

### 115/16 Elm Football Club

Councillor Pinnock advised that he had been in contact with a small local company who wished to sponsor Elm football team. He had requested the Clerk to provide contact details of the club that uses Begdale field. The Clerk had replied that his contact had left the club and that the padlock on the gates had been changed and that Councillor Brand, the Elm Parish Chairman, was the only person who might have details

It was agreed that Councillor Brand be asked to contact the club, failing which a notice be attached to the gates requesting they contact the Council immediately

### 116/16 Application for financial assistance

The application for financial assistance from the Citizen's Advice Rural Cambs which had been previously circulated, was considered

Councillor Pinnock proposed that the sum of £500 requested was excessive in that of the 2,600 people helped in Fenland, 146 only came from Elm. Moreover Wisbech Town Council gave a grant of £1,000 to the CARB and if Elm Parish Council were to give a grant on a proportionate per capita basis, Elm Parish should give £120. This proposal was not seconded

Councillor Patrick proposed that the sum of £200 be given. The proposal was not seconded

Other members proposed and agreed that the request of £500 be granted in full  
(Councillor Pinnock requested that his dissent from this decision be recorded)

**RESOLVED:** that the application from the Citizen's Advice Rural Cambs for financial support in the sum of £500.00 be approved.

### 117/16 Correspondence

The Clerk informed members that there are currently no items of correspondence for reporting to the council.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

Councillor Pinnock thanked the outgoing Clerk, Terry Jordan, for the excellent work done for the Council and for his help and commitment. Members and those attending showed their appreciation by a round of applause

Mrs Butcher was formally welcomed to the Council and it was wished that her stay would be a long and happy one.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017, to commence at 7.00 pm, at the Parish Council office, Begdale Road, Elm.

**Meeting finished at 9.10 pm**

Signature :.....( Council Chairman).

Date: