

ELM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

18 OCTOBER 2011 – 6.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Brand, Chairman; Councillors Mrs Johnson, Pinnock, Rogers, Stokes and Webb.

Apologies: Councillors Cotterell, Mrs Cotterell, Softley and Tilney plus County Councillor Mrs Tuck and District Councillor Sutton.

The minutes of the meeting of 21 September 2011 were confirmed and signed.

61/11 Open Forum

(1) Planning application F/YR11/0747/F

A group of local residents attended the meeting to inform members of their concerns regarding planning application F/YR11/0747/F, which proposes the change of use of land west of Bar Drove, Elm for the siting of two mobile homes and two touring caravans. The residents are not only concerned about this particular application but also that its approval could set an undesirable precedent for further applications of a similar nature in the locality.

Members encouraged local residents to submit individual letters of objection to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), to demonstrate to the LPA the strength of public feeling, of opposition, in relation to this development proposal.

Members decided that the concerns of the local residents be noted and that they be taken into when considering this planning application (minute 67/11 refers).

(2) Speed limit on March Road, Coldham

A resident of Coldham expressed his concern regarding the speeds at which vehicles are driven along March Road, Coldham – he detailed some of the incidents of excessive speed that he had witnessed – and enquired as to whether the current speed limit of 60 mph at that location could be reduced.

The Clerk reminded members of the Local Highway Authority's new policy on speed limits, as detailed in a leaflet produced by Cambridgeshire County Council entitled "Your Community – Your Speed Limit: a guide to how local communities can change speed limits" (minute 29/11 (3) refers).

Members decided that the concerns of the resident be noted and that the Clerk would ascertain from the Local Highway Authority the feasibility of the Parish Council of making application, under this new policy, for extension (further towards March) of the existing 40 mph speed limit which applies to part of March Road, Coldham.

62/11 The Standards Board for England – Members' Code of Conduct

Members were reminded of the need to ensure that their Register of Declarable Interests is kept up-to-date.

No members had any amendments to make to their register entries.

63/11 Matters arising from minutes of last meeting

(1) Facilities for young people in the parish (minute 49/11 (1))

Councillor Rogers reported that no further progress had been made in relation to this initiative and he suggested that the Parish Council should revert to the original proposal of providing a small equipped play area for young children and should not be seeking to lead on the provision of a skateboard park in Elm; the Parish Council should, he suggested, support the community if it wished to develop such a project.

Councillor Rogers recommended that the Parish Council should seek to work with Fenland District Council (FDC) to develop the existing play area off Grove Gardens (once the site has been adopted by FDC).

Members indicated that, under such an arrangement, they would be prepared to provide funding towards play equipment at this location; they would be happy to see the Section 106 Planning Agreement monies which are allocated to public open space provision in Elm (minute 49/11 (2) refers) used for play equipment provision as part of such a scheme.

Members decided that

- (1) the Clerk would ascertain from Fenland District Council the feasibility of such a joint approach to developing the equipped play area off Grove Gardens, Elm;
- (2) the Parish Council would not be leading on the provision of a skateboard park in Elm; it would, however, support the community if it wished to develop such a project.

(2) Section 106 Planning Agreement monies relating to the parish of Elm (minute 49/11 (2))

The Clerk informed members that Coldham Residents Action Group had applied to Fenland District Council for the use of some Section 106 Agreement monies to fund the provision of fencing at Coldham playing field but that, before it is able to consider the request, Fenland District Council needs confirmation that Elm Parish Council has neither objections to this proposal nor has other schemes or projects which it feels require this funding.

Being mindful that the Parish Council had not proposed any projects itself and being unaware of other community groups/organisations in the parish which are looking to call upon Section 106 monies, members can see no reason why the request from the Coldham Residents Action Group for its fencing project should not be supported by way of Section 106 Agreement monies.

Members decided that Fenland District Council be informed that Elm Parish Council formally supports the application submitted by the Coldham Residents Action Group for use of Section 106 Agreement monies to fund the provision of fencing at Coldham playing field.

(3) Elm war memorial (minute 57/11)

The Clerk reported that he had undertaken investigations with a number of relevant persons/organisations within the parish, with the aim of clarifying ownership of the grassed area adjacent to the war memorial but that none of those consulted were able to confirm the position absolutely; however, Councillor Cotterell is of the belief that this area of land is in the ownership of Elm Parish Council.

Members decided that the Clerk would seek to register this piece of land, as being in the ownership of the Parish Council, with the Land Registry.

(4) Land at the rear of Grove Gardens, Elm (minute 58/11)

The Clerk reported to members on the information obtained from Fenland District Council in relation to the public open space (with play equipment) and community open space requirements of the Section 106 Planning Obligation applicable to the planning permission for this development. The documentation makes clear the purposes for which these areas of land must be utilised.

Members decided that the information provided by the Clerk be noted.

64/11 Police matters

The Clerk reported that PCSO Martin Bogunovic, of the Wisbech and District Neighbourhood Policing Team, was unable to attend the meeting, He had, however, provided a report detailing recent incidents of crime and disorder within the geographical area covered by Elm Parish Council, which the Clerk presented to members, including:

- Coldham – one incident of criminal damage to an agricultural vehicle.
- Fridaybridge – one dwelling burglary.
- Elm – three incidents of theft from a vehicle; one theft of a vehicle; two incidents of criminal damage to vehicles; one incident of theft from a shed; two reports of quad bikes being ridden in Grove Gardens and Abington Grove; one dwelling burglary; one minor incident of youth-related anti-social behaviour; one incident of copper cable being stolen from an electricity sub-station.
- Rings End – one incident of quad bikes being ridden across farmland.

The Clerk also informed members of emerging and ongoing issues across the area covered by the Wisbech and District Neighbourhood Policing Team.

One of the emerging issues is reports of thefts of flowers and other items from graves at Elm Cemetery; the Police have asked that the Parish Council considers ways of addressing this issue and have suggested measures such as installation of CCTV cameras, provision of lighting, locking the cemetery during the hours of darkness.

Members considered the suggestions of the Police in relation to action that could be taken to prevent the occasional thefts of flowers etc from the cemetery.

Members do not consider it would be appropriate to lock the cemetery or to provide CCTV cameras and security lighting. They feel that relatives and friends of persons buried at the cemetery should be able to access the cemetery at all times and that it would only be appropriate to install "commercial" security measures if there were a need to protect the Parish Council's assets. Also the cost of providing security measures would result in additional running costs of the Parish Council, at a time when local authorities are looking not to increase charges to the public.

Members are very proud of the condition of the cemetery, which does not suffer the criminal damage that many others do. The cemetery is a public place and items left there are done so at the public's own risk.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk, on behalf of PCSO Bogunovic, be noted and that their views in relation to action that could be taken to prevent the occasional theft of flowers from the cemetery, as set out above, be forwarded to the Police.

65/11 Reports from District and County Councillors for the parish

Given the absence from the meeting of both of the District Councillors (Cotterell and Sutton) and the County Councillor (Mrs Tuck) who represent the parish of Elm, no reports were received by the Parish Council.

66/11 Highway issues

Further to minute 53/11, the Chairman reported the quotation that he had obtained for the necessary works to the footpath adjacent to Bramley Court, Coldham; this being in the sum of £895.00 plus VAT. He informed members that it had not proved possible to obtain quotations for this work from other appropriate contractors.

The Clerk reported the Street Lighting Team at Cambridgeshire County Council had undertaken to address the street lighting issue at Abington Grove, Elm.

Councillor Rogers reported to members that a resident of Rose Lane, Elm had informed him of pot holes at that location; the Chairman added that there are also two such highway defects on Station Road, Coldham.

Members decided that

- (1) the need for road repair works in Elm (Rose Lane) and Coldham (Station Road) be brought to the attention of the Local Highway Authority;
- (2) the quotation for the necessary works to the footpath adjacent to Bramley Court, Coldham, in the sum of £895.00 plus VAT, be accepted.

67/11 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 shed to rear of existing dwelling (part retrospective) at 19 Tower Road, Fridaybridge – F/YR11/0715/F (applicant: Mr J Lea).

That the application be supported.

- (2) Change of use of detached double garage and part of garden land to engineering business (retrospective) on land south of Orchard House, Main road, Elm – F/YR11/0733/F (applicant: Mr M Claxton).

That the application be supported, subject to suitable conditions, to include:

- *the permission being personal to the applicant*
- *the business on-site being operated by one person only*
- *hours of operation being restricted to: 8.00 am to 5.30 pm Mondays to Fridays; 8.00 am to 12 noon on Saturdays; at no times on Sundays and Bank Holidays.*

Members considered a letter of objection to this application from a resident of Main Road, Elm.

- (3) Change of use of land for the siting of two mobile homes and two touring caravans on land west of Bar Drove, Elm – F/YR11/0747/F (applicant: Mr and Mrs Smith).

Object to the application for the following reasons:

- *the site lies outside of the Development Area Boundary for the village of Elm*
- *the access road is inadequate to serve the traffic likely to be generated by the residential development of this site*
- *the proposal, if approved, would have a detrimental impact upon the rural character of the area*
- *approval of this application would set an undesirable precedent for further applications of a similar nature in the locality.*

- (4) Erection of 3 x 15.0 metre (hub height) wind turbines on land north-west of Chestnut Farm, Nettle Bank, Elm – F/YR11/07458/F (applicant: Mr P Lankfer).

That the application be supported.

(Councillor Pinnock requested it be recorded that he abstained from voting on this application)

68/11 Finance

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

Income

Fenland District Council	Precept – second instalment	£13,750.00
Richard King Memorials	Cemetery memorial fee	£135.00
Grounds & Co.	Cottage rent (less fees and gutter repair)	£470.00
UK Power Networks	Electricity wayleaves	£176.61
Richard King Memorials	Garden of Rest memorial fee	£100.00
Total Income		£14,631.61

Expenditure

R J Warren Ltd	Grounds maintenance contract	£2,293.61
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £114.04), Broadband and other expenses	£555.32
Mrs S Woodhouse	Playing field security (quarterly payment to 30 September 2011)	£100.00
Total Expenditure		£2,948.93

In addition, the Clerk reported on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 30 September 2011 (in the total sum of £128,285.71), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months.

Further to minute 21/11, the Clerk reported on the management accounts that he had produced for the second quarter of the 2011/12 financial year and responded to members' questions in that regard. Councillor Pinnock suggested that additional financial information be provided within future quarterly reports. The Clerk reminded members that the nature of the information being provided accorded with the decision reached at minute 21/11.

Members decided that

- (1) the income of £14,631.61 be noted and that the expenditure of £2,948.93 be authorised;
- (2) the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 30 September 2011, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months, be noted;
- (3) the financial information within the first quarter's management accounts be noted and that Councillor Pinnock would report to the Parish Council on the type of additional financial information he would like to see reported to members on a quarterly basis.

69/11 Appointment to Elm Centre Management Committee

Further to minute 50/10 (2), the Clerk informed members of Councillor Rogers' resignation as the Parish Council's representative on the Elm Centre Management Committee and invited the Parish Council to appoint another member to this position.

Members decided that, given the absence of a number of members of the Parish Council from the meeting, this matter be deferred to the next meeting of Elm Parish Council.

70/11 War memorials in Elm Parish

Further to minute 32/11, the Clerk reported on progress regarding the proposed cleaning and restoration works to the war memorials at Elm and Fridaybridge.

The Clerk informed members

- that quotations for the recommended work had been sought from four suitably qualified and experienced contractors
- that, at the time of the meeting, three quotations had been received
- of the financial range of the quotations received
- that he had sent copies of the quotations to the Parish Council's war Memorials Advisor, to enable him to assess the quotations against the contract criteria that he had recommended
- of the Parish Council's War Memorials Advisor's recommendation that all of the contractors be requested to provide additional information or clarification of certain aspects of the information already provided, to enable the quotations to be compared on a like-for-like basis.
- of the potential to obtain grant funding of up to 50% of the cost of the works from the War Memorials Trust.

Members decided

- (1) that the information reported by the Clerk be noted;

- (2) to support the recommendation of the Parish Council's War Memorials Advisor that all of the contractors be requested to provide additional information or clarification of certain aspects of the information already provided, to enable the quotations to be compared on a like-for-like basis;
- (3) following receipt of the information to be sought from the contractors, the matter be considered further by the other Parish Council;
- (4) that, following the acceptance of a quotation by the Parish Council, an application for grant funding be made to the War Memorials Trust.

71/11 Correspondence

- (1) Cambridgeshire County Council's HCV Strategy.

The Clerk reported an invitation from Cambridgeshire County Council to send a representative of the Parish Council to attend a meeting on 29 November 2011 at Swavesey Village College.

The purpose of the meeting is to give local councils an opportunity to comment upon the HCV Strategy prior to its referral to the Cabinet at the County Council for formal adoption.

Members decided that the invitation be noted and that any member wishing to attend would inform the Clerk, so that a place could be booked.

- (2) Victim Support - request for a financial donation.

Further to minute 56/11 (2), the Clerk reported that, as a result of informing Victim Support of the Parish Council's decision in relation to the application for financial assistance (i.e. that, in the absence of any evidence that people in the parish of Elm had received assistance from this organisation, no financial donation would be made), the organisation had now provided details of the support that had been provided to the victims of crime within the parish during the previous twelve months. Victim Support expressed the hope that the Parish Council would reconsider the application for financial assistance in the light of the information provided.

The Clerk read to members the information now provided by Victim Support.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted but that the decision at minute 56/11 (2), i.e. not to provide financial assistance to Victim Support, should stand.

- (3) Queen's Diamond Jubilee Beacons scheme.

The Clerk reported receipt of an information pack in relation to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Beacons scheme, which is being promoted, by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, as a means of celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

The scheme aims to achieve 2,012 beacons being lit - throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man, UK Overseas Territories and the Commonwealth – between 10.00 pm and 10.30 pm on 4 June 2012.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted.

72/11 Remembrance Sunday

Members discussed the Parish Council's participation in the Remembrance Sunday service at Elm church and the subsequent wreath laying at the war memorial on 13 November 2011.

The Clerk reported that Councillor Softley had informed him that he would not be available to read a service at the church service or to lay a wreath at the war memorial in Elm, on behalf of the Parish Council. In addition, Councillor Cotterell had indicated to the Clerk that he may be unable, due to health reasons, to undertake this role also.

Members decided that

- (1) the situation regarding the unavailability of Councillor Softley and the likely unavailability of Councillor Cotterell to read a service and to lay a wreath be noted;
- (2) the Clerk would order a wreath and arrange for it to be delivered to Councillor Stokes.

73/11 Parish Council's Standing Orders

Councillor Pinnock mentioned that the Parish Council's current Standing Orders, approved in 2008, do not include a provision for "Resolutions moved on Notice" and requested that the Parish Council considers, at its next meeting, the addition of this provision to the Standing Orders.

Councillor Pinnock explained the reasoning behind this request and provided the Clerk with suggested wording for this proposed new Standing Order.

Members decided that this matter be discussed at the next meeting.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to enable the matter to be considered at the earliest opportunity)

74/11 Cemetery – water supply

Further to minute 38/11 (2), the Chairman reported that he is currently obtaining costings for constructing and installing a box to enclose the new water tap at the cemetery.

Members decided that the information reported by the Chairman be noted.

(The Chairman agreed to this item of business being discussed as a matter of urgency to enable members to be informed of the current situation)

75/11 Next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council had been scheduled for 22 November 2011, commencing at 6.30 pm, at the Parish Council office, Begdale Road, Elm.

Meeting finished at 8.40 pm

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

Date:.....