

ELM PARISH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

Held at the Parish Office Begdale Road Elm

MINUTES

22 MAY 2018 – 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Brand, Chairman; Councillors Mrs Cotterell, Miss Ferguson, Mrs Hopkin, Hopkin, Mrs Davis, Milham, Stokes, Mrs Luffman and Butcher

Apologies: Councillors Mr Pooley and Mr Feaviour

In attendance: District Councillors Sutton and Tanfield and a number of parishioners attended the Assembly.

The minutes of the Annual Assembly of 2017 (held on 23 May) were confirmed and signed.

EA01/18 Annual Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council

The Chairman of Elm Parish Council, Councillor Brand, opened the meeting and thanked all those attending. He was asked to read out the Minutes by a parishioner but said that he would not do so. The Clerk provided a summary of the matters discussed.

The Chairman of the Parish Council outlined the activities, projects and achievements of Elm Parish Council during the municipal year 2017/18, including:

I would like to thank fellow Parish Councillors, County Councillors and District Councillors for their help in what has been quite a turbulent year for the council, with 4 members leaving and new ones joining and trust the coming year will go more smoothly.

Claire has had her first full year as clerk and financial officer and, I feel, that she is settling in well after she has had training and is getting more experience every week. I feel that she will be an asset to the council in the future.

Ground maintenance across the Parish

We have had the contract for grass cutting and ground maintenance re-quoted this year and the contract was given to Idverde and in doing so, have saved just under £5000 for the year.

Cemetery Cottage

We are now in control of the letting of the cottage and the same tenants are there and, as before, they are quite happy with our arrangement for collecting the rent. This again has saved us the fee that the letting agent was charging us.

Elm Cemetery

We are still in the process of marking out the new part of the cemetery. Unfortunately, it is the Drainage Board that is holding us up.

Play Areas and Open Spaces

Fridaybridge Playing field is ongoing and the work should be started soon as the funding is now in place.

Support in the Community

The Parish Council still provides support to local groups and organisations etc. which benefits parishioners.

Highways

The Speed Watch is ongoing and the volunteers are doing a very good job for which I would like to thank them. I would also like to thank the co-ordinator for excellent management of the scheme. They have now got their own web site so if anyone wants to know results of the speed watch, they can find the information there.

Street Lighting

This is still ongoing.

Planning

Elm Parish Council is keen to ensure that community infrastructure such as roads and schools keep pace with any new housing within the village and it is hoped to discuss this year the possibility of bus shelters in Elm and Fridaybridge and looking into the possibility of a village hall in Elm and Coldham.

Those present noted the Chairman of Elm Parish Council's Annual Report.

EA02/18 Matters raised by parishioners

A Parishioner asked if there was any progress on the 14 point plan discussed at the site visit on the 16th January 2018. She also mentioned about the signage at Colletts Bridge and the Private Funded Highway Initiative on the Agenda for the Annual Meeting. The Clerk confirmed that she had heard nothing further in respect of that site visit but would enquire further. The other items are on the Agenda for the Annual meeting to follow this meeting and further information would be provided then.

Another Parishioner raised his concerns as to the overdevelopment of the whole of Elm generally and the increase in traffic. He stated that upgrading the roads was actually doing a disservice to parishioners as it was causing others to use the roads as an alternative road to work. He asked Members to think about the impact of further development in Elm. The Clerk mentioned that she had spoken to a Highways England Officer about the traffic at Elm Hall Hotel roundabout and that the Council could ask them to review the traffic management at that roundabout.

A parishioner mentioned that he was frustrated about the planning applications being passed by the Parish Council without proper consideration. A member mentioned that Elm Parish Councillors don't have a lot of sway in respect of Planning Applications as they are only consultees. A District Councillor present said that she understood Parishioners frustrations about the planning process but there has to be a very good legal planning reason as to why a planning application is refused and if an application is refused then it costs the District Council a lot of money in legal costs if it is subsequently passed by the Planning Inspectorate.

The District Council said that planning applications are the responsibility of the District Council and highways are the remit of the County Council.

A parishioner mentioned that Cobra Engineering have a defibrillator should anyone require one in an emergency.

The Clerk gave some further details as to the issues affecting planning considerations. A Parishioner mentioned that ultimately the Government want to allow development so you can make comments about them but ultimately the y will usually be allowed.

A Member said that she felt that it was unfair to criticise the Council for not considering planning applications sufficiently as they had put in a lot of work to get planning applications turned down and they had ultimately still be allowed either by FDC or the Planning Inspectorate.

A Parishioner raised the matter of whether it was wise to consider installing bus shelters if the bus service was being cut. Members confirmed that the bus service in the Parish was not being cut for this coming year.

A Parishioner raised the issue of issues being discussed in private. He asked about the Grounds Maintenance contract. The Clerk confirmed that four quotes were received. Three were for similar figures and one more expensive. The Council then took the view that they would appoint the cheapest of the quotes and see how they got on for a year and then consider the situation after a year.

A parishioner asked if it was true that the development planned for Gosmoor Lane was going to be increased to 75 units instead of 50. It was confirmed that the development was to remain at 50 units.

A parishioner raised the issue of paperwork being made available to the public prior to the meeting rather than just Members.

The Clerk said that it could go on the Agenda for discussion next month.

The matter of the Cemetery works was raised and the Parishioner asked if the public would be informed of the works. It was also suggested that the Environment Agency be approached about their restrictions. The Clerk confirmed that they would.

A Parishioner mentioned that three Councillors did not have their declarations of interest on the website. The Clerk confirmed that there were a couple of amendments required and then they would be concluded.

No additional matters on other subjects were raised by parishioners.

Attendees noted the situation.

Meeting finished at 6.40 pm

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

Date: