

# ELSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes

Elsworth Parish Council meeting held online via zoom  
7.30pm Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020

### PRESENT

Chairman Peter Deer (PD)  
Councillors Alison Brolls (AB) Victoria McNeil (VM) David Pope (DP) Margaret Stevenson (MSt)  
James Witherow (JW)  
Mrs E Sim (ES) Parish Clerk  
In attendance D Cllr Nick Wright  
D Cllr Mark Howell  
C.Cllr Mandy Smith

### 2020/09-1 To receive and approve apologies for absence

Rob Askham (Work Commitments)

#### 1.1 Chairman's address. Procedures for the meeting and update on Covid 19 issues

The Chairman outlined the various regulations introduced in respect of coronavirus:

- Any elections due to have been held are postponed until May 2021; and
- The requirement for Parish Councils to meet physically has been removed until May 2021 and provision made for virtual meetings to be held instead, provided the public is able to observe proceedings. As with a physical meeting, the minimum number of councillors taking part to make the meeting quorate remains 3 and members of the public observing do not have the right to speak and may only do so if expressly invited to do so by the chair.
- Year end accounts and audit are also impacted and ES would outline current requirements in agenda item 6 (Finance).

The Chairman then outlined procedural points for the Council's first virtual meeting to enable the meeting to be conducted effectively and efficiently.

### 2020/09-2 To receive declarations of interest & requests for dispensations

- 2.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. PD declared an interest in item 8.1 (neighbour).
- 2.2 Requests to speak . None.
- 2.3 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. No requests received.
- 2.4 To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate. No requests received.

### 2020/09-3 To sign & approve the Minutes of the Council meetings dated 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020

It was proposed,(JW) seconded (DP) and unanimously approved that the Chairman sign the Minutes with no amendments.

#### 3.1 Matters to Report from the previous Minutes

Age UK Warden Scheme. VM reported that during lockdown in April, the Parish Councils participating in the Community Warden proposal were informed that their application to the Cambridgeshire County Council ("CCC") Innovate & Cultivate Grant Fund had been unsuccessful. Elsworth PC's decision to participate had been conditional on successful grant funding. The other participating PC's – Fenstanton, Fen Drayton and Lolworth – wanted to pursue the project and, after discussion with SCDC and Age UK, decided to make 2 new applications for funding, one to CCC and one to SCDC. They asked if Elsworth wanted to continue to participate. There were a number of uncertainties and questions which none of the participants could answer regarding success in obtaining grants, their administration and plans for what would happen when grants expired. In view of those uncertainties, concerns already expressed by Elsworth Councillors, the conditionality of the PC's agreement to the proposal and the fact that during lockdown Elsworth had mobilised quite well to support its older people, it was concluded that Elsworth couldn't continue to participate in the project. The other Councils and Age UK were notified.

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- 3.2 To receive the Clerk's Report  
The Clerk's report is appended to these minutes.

### Internal Audit.

Councillors noted the following points raised by the Internal Auditor.

- *Extremely large amount of expenses to be reclaimed by clerk (for Computer/printer). The council should ensure it has appropriate payment methods and systems of reimbursement so that staff are not significantly out of pocket on the council's behalf.* PD and ES to discuss.
- *The Parish Council should seek advice about contributing to the Churchyard grass cutting. Current advice from NALC is that Parish Councils do not have the power to contribute towards land, buildings and affairs of ecclesiastical charities.* Councillors unanimously agreed to continue this as it was felt to be of general community benefit similar to the verge cutting, brook clearance, etc.
- *The Parish Council should review the appropriateness of spending significant amounts of money upgrading land/buildings that it doesn't own/lease and has no obligations towards.* Councillors agreed that the expenditure on the car park facility had been of general benefit to the entire village community and was therefore appropriate.
- *Declaration of interest. Councillors do not appear to be declaring interests when payments are being made to them (for reimbursement).* Councillors noted that this arose from reimbursements to councillors for purchases for the village flowerbed and Christmas lights celebration. Reimbursements would, in future, automatically trigger a recorded declaration of interest for councillors.
- *The parish council should review the hours worked by the Clerk to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet the demands of the council. The role of the clerk has changed significantly in the last 10 years.* It was noted that the Clerk and the Chair have discussed this a number of times and would come forward with a proposal concerning the Clerk's hours in due course.
- *Asset register. Records historic and current (depreciating) value. Check current requirements for insurance purposes.* The Clerk would check on current advice this matter.

### Fardell's Lane Reserve

Councillors noted the report from Paul Harding and unanimously agreed to the expenditure on tools that was requested. (Prop VM Sec JW).

### Defibrillator

The Clerk is liaising with the suppliers of the defibrillator to ensure it is fit for use. An electrician is being sought to re-fix the cabinet in a watertight fashion.

### 2020/09 -4 County Council Business

- 4.1 Highway Maintenance. Cllr Smith reported that some officers had been assigned to the contact centre. The Chairman expressed concern at the continued lack of maintenance to signage and road surfaces in the area. Cllr Smith advised contacting Mr Denis Vacher to convey the Council's concerns.
- 4.2. Interactive Speed signs. Cllr Smith advised that none of the A14 legacy funding schemes had come through to date and that no deadline for provision of the speed signs or their number was known, but that she understood that those for the villages she had proposed were on the list.

### 2020/09-5 District Council Business

The Chairman noted that decision notices on planning applications were not being received and that comments made by the Parish Council were not appearing on the District Council's planning portal.

Cllr Wright advised that

- Many residents, both applicants and affected neighbours have had issues with not being able to receive updates on planning applications. Some Parish Councils have also been experiencing difficulties. As DC Officers are working in difficult times at present, Cllrs have asked for a regular meeting with the Director of Planning in order to raise any issues. Cllr Wright requested the Parish Council, or residents experiencing difficulties to raise them with him and he would speak with officers on their behalf. Cllr Wright advised the Chairman to *write to the head of planning*

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*re: problems encountered.* The Planning Committee continues to meet more frequently to help progress with a backlog of planning applications.

- The New LGF had been published. A list of potential sites for housing would be published. Residents should not be over concerned about the hundreds of thousands of houses put forward by landowners/developers as SCDC's requirement going forward was relatively modest.
- Response to the Covid Pandemic had been amazing throughout South Cambs. Cllr Wright expressed appreciation for the tireless work that had been done in parishes and by the volunteers who stepped forward.

### 2020/09-6 Finance

#### 6.1 To approve payment of accounts.

Councillors unanimously approved the following invoices. (Prop VM Sec JW)

<b>Payments January 16th-31st March 2020</b>	
BT. Phone and Internet	241.26
M Szekely. Renovation of woodwork Bus shelter	2,000.00
Elsworth Sports Club Hire of Sports Pavilion Christmas Lights event	10.00
Pendrill Publications. Elsworth Times	75.00
Information Commissioners Office Data Protection Fee	35.00
Thomas Harris. Elsworth Times Delivery	30.00
Guava Design Web site hosting annual fee	120.00
Guava Design Elsworthvillage.com domain name Annual fee	30.00
Neil Kenny Fardell's Lane Maintenance	116.25
Neil Kenny General Village Maintenance	54.00
Richardson's Tree Surgery Essential Tree Surgery on dangerous tree	228.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>2939.51</b>

<b>April 1<sup>st</sup> -9<sup>th</sup> September 2020</b>	
<b>Payments</b>	
BT Telephone /Internet	197.25
Neil Kenny Verge Cut	390.00
Zurich Municipal PC Annual Insurance Premium	419.88
Microsoft PC Clerk's email renewal	43.20
Neil Kenny Verge Cut	390.00
Neil Kenny General Village Maintenance	353.75
Pendrill Publications Elsworth Times Publication	75.00
Thomas Harris Delivery Elsworth Times	30.00
Neil Kenny Verge Cut	390.00
Cambridgeshire County Council LHI Contribution	3,000.00
Davison & Co (Barford) Ltd Annual Peppercorn Rent Play area	0.05
BT Telephone /Internet	215.05
Neil Kenny Fardell's Lane maintenance	74.50
Neil Kenny Verge Cut	390.00
Neil Kenny General Village Maintenance	532.00
The Play Inspection Company Annual Safety Inspection	180.00
Starboard Systems Ltd Scribe accounts package Annual Subscription 2020	308.40
LGS Services Internal Audit 2019-2020	114.00
Thomas Harris Delivery Elsworth Times	30.00
Neil Kenny Verge Cut	390.00
Adrian Parfitt Joinery Play equipment repairs	67.26
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,590.34</b>

<b>Payments pending</b>	
Algar Signcraft Signage for play area	86.40
HP Inc UK Ink cartridges and printing costs 15.04.2029 – 14 08.2020	40.96
Mrs E Sim Clerks expenses postage and mileage 18.06. 2019 -10.08.2020	87.30
Neil Kenny Fardell's Lane Cut Meadow	43.50

Elsworth Parish Council Chairman - Mr Peter Deer

Clerk to the Council: Mrs Elizabeth Sim. Mercia Cottage, Brockley Road Elsworth CB23 4JS  
Tel 01954 267664 Email clerk@elsworthvillage.com.

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Neil Kenny Verge Cut No 6	390.00
Neil Kenny General village maintenance 29.05 -09.09.2020	293.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>941.41</b>

### 6.2 Notice of receipts received.

<b>January 16<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020</b>	
Interest PC savings a/c Nat west	0.82
Interest Santander a/c	12.16
Interest section 106 The Causeway	1.32
Interest Section 106 The Drift	1.01
Interest Wakelin Donation	5.00
BT refund	50.26
Samuel Franklin Fund Donation	1,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,070.56</b>

<b>April 1<sup>st</sup> -9<sup>th</sup> September 2020</b>	
Precept	11,500
Interest PC savings a/c Nat west and Santander	21.94
Interest section 106 The Causeway	0.91
Interest Section 106 The Drift	0.71
Interest Wakelin Donation	9.58
BT refund	50.26
Cambridgeshire County Council Donation for verge cutting	408.53
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,941.67</b>

### 6.3 To present and approve accounts for financial year 2019-2020 for audit:

To note completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20 by the Council's appointed Internal Auditor

#### Section 1 – Annual governance statement

**RESOLUTION:** That this Council has considered the findings of the review of the system of internal audit and approves the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31/03/2020

#### Section 2 – Accounting Statements

**RESOLUTION:** That this Council has considered the accounting statements shown in Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and approves said statements for year ended 31/03/2020

Item 6.3 Deferred to a meeting to be held on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### 2020/09-7 Village Matters

**7.1 Play Area.** To review items identified in the annual safety inspection, approve work to be undertaken and to note the re-opening of the play area and review its use.

Councillors noted that a Covid risk assessment had been completed and that the play area had been inspected and cleaned before reopening. A Quotation for some £30,000.00 had been received for repairs highlighted in the safety inspection report, the cost of which was beyond the council's means. It was agreed that the long-term aim was to look to the refurbishment of the whole play area; however, at present the Parish Council did not have the funds for this and the current (annually renewable) lease prohibited applications for funding. The Chairman proposed that, in the short term, the Council should look to carrying out modest scale repairs, by identifying and prioritising work to be done and allocate some £2-3,000 for such works. Councillors noted that Cambourne Parish Council groundsman had looked at the play area with a view to providing a quote for works to be carried out. Councillors agreed to defer further discussion on the matter to the meeting scheduled for the 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

**7.2. Risk Assessment** - to approve the Covid-19 Risk Assessment for the play area site and equipment. Approved unanimously. Councillors agreed that the risk assessment should be regularly reviewed as the situation with covid develops and as government guidance changes.

**7.3 Community Payback Teams.** PD and ES had met the scheme coordinator and a supervisor some weeks ago and discussed the works that the Team could carry out. It was understood that a risk assessment had to be done by the scheme organisers before any offer of works could be made. Since this meeting no correspondence at all has been received from the organisers.

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- 7.4 Street Lights (5). Councillors agreed unanimously** to mandate the Chairman and Clerk to seek quotations from electricity companies and accept the best price for power supply.

**2020/09-8 Planning**

**8.1 To note planning applications received**

**20/03708/HFUL & 20/03709/LBC 38 Boxworth Road Elsworth CB23 4JQ. Mr A Lane**

Proposed erection of new detached garage and two storey rear extension to existing  
*Parish Council recommendation: No recommendation. Comments sent to the planning authorities.*

**S/3134/19/FL 16 Brook Street Elsworth Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB23 4HX Mr Adrian Albone**  
Change of use from Dwelling house (Class C3) to Office use (Class B1)

Application withdrawn

**20/02961/HFUL Low Farm Brook Street Elsworth. Mr Thornton**

Demolition of existing outbuilding, porch, garage, conservatory and the erection of single storey garden room with link extension to side, replacement garage with annex above, replacement rear conservatory and alterations to include replacement of 8 windows, installation of skylights, conversion of existing outbuilding, refurbishment of existing well and repositioning of entrance gates.

*PC recommendation: The Parish Council was split on the recommendation for this application. The Council members' voting on the application was: Support – 3 members No recommendation - 2 members, Declaration of interest (neighbour), 1 Abstention, 1 member absent on leave. Comments sent to District Council.*

**S/3134/19/FL 16 Brook Street Elsworth Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB23 4HX**

Change of use from Dwelling house (Class C3) to Office use (Class B1) Mr Adrian Albone  
Application withdrawn.

**Applications for Tree work in a conservation area**

**20/1927/TTCA 24 Brook Street Elsworth Cambridge Mrs Sonia Hegan**

Fell Dead Silver Birch Tree

*Tree Warden comments. This is considered to be routine gardening maintenance.*

**20/1929/TTCA 13 Cotterells Lane Elsworth CB23 4JR Mr Johnson**

Variegated Norway Maple – Fell. 2 x Cherry - Reduce height and spread on all sides by 1.5m. Alder - Reduce height by 1.5m, reduce spread by 1m to shape and balance. Prunus - Reduce height by 1.5m, reduce spread by 2m on all sides, remove epicormic shoots on all sides. Purple Norway Maple - Fell

*Tree Warden comments. This is considered to be routine gardening maintenance.*

**20/1925/TTCA: 5 Broad End Elsworth Cambridge Cambridgeshire Ms Trueman**

T1 : Apple ~ Reduce lateral growth over neighbouring property to centre of hedge; reduce height by 2.0 metres and balance remaining crown. T2 and T3 : 2 x large Leylandi ~ Top and fell to ground level. T4 : Willow ~ Remove secondary stem. T5 : Holly ~ Clear neighbouring roof by 1.0 to 1.5 metres. T6 : Elder within Pyracantha ~ Fell stump.

*Tree Warden comments No comments.*

**20/1783/TTCA 3 Brockley Road Elsworth CB23 4JS Mrs R Ross**

Proposal: T1 Walnut - Fell to ground level.

*Tree warden's comment: The tree has outgrown its location and if it has a significant fungal infection, I have no comment.*

**20/1900/TTCA The Avenue Business Park Brockley Road Elsworth. Mr Edward Davison**

7 days' notice of intention to remove an Ash tree in a dangerous condition at Avenue Business Park, Brockley Road, Elsworth, CB23 4EY which is sited within the Elsworth Conservation Area.

*PC response not required as permission will have to be granted for safety reasons.*

**Date of next Parish Council meeting. (online) November 18<sup>th</sup> 2020**

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 20:50

Signed .....(Chairman). Date.....