

ELSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held in Elston Village Hall Tuesday October 22, 2019, at 7:00pm

Cllrs. Bertie Pinchera (Chairman), Peter Clark, Mathew Dyer, Michael Key, Jim Archer (A), Rev. Liz Murray, Andy Biddlecombe.

Also present: Alex Raynor (RCAN), Newark and Sherwood Councillor Ivor Walker, Daniel Ewers (RCAN) and 6 residents.

1. PROPOSAL TO APPOINT A MINUTE TAKER IN THE ABSENCE OF A CLERK

Proposal for Alex Raynor, Director of Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire (RCAN), to take minutes for the meeting in the absence of clerk, unanimously approved by the council.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Jim Archer apologised for his absence.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2019 INCLUDING NOTES OF MATTERS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as circulated and signed by the Chairman.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were registered by the council.

5. REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councillor Ivor Walker highlighted the following updates :

- Funding for the A46 improvements secure
- Development work to the old Robin Hood Hotel had commenced.
- All schools in Newark and Sherwood now had an Ofsted rating of 'good' or 'outstanding'.
- The National Association of Local Councils' (NALC) Annual General Meeting is to be held on November 21, 2019 at Epperstone Village Hall , all Parish Councillors encouraged to attend.
- Parish Forum to be held on November 2, 2019 at North Muskham, whereby Cllrs would receive training on NSDC planning regulations. All Cllrs advised to attend.
- Caution should be exercised when using private hire vehicles, licenced outside of the district.

6. UPDATE ON CHEQUERS INN PROGRESS

The council were updated on developments relating to the Chequers Inn site. A site visit had been conducted prior to the meeting and relevant paperwork examined for the site. The council stated that they were looking to make an offer on the site before the end of the week. Cllr Dyer would update within the closed section of the meeting.

7. ELSTON COMMUNITY PLAN

The chairman asked the council to consider whether a potential refresh/ re write of the Elston Community Plan produced in 2004 would be beneficial for the parish.

Alex Raynor of Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire gave an overview of the Community Led Planning processes, community consultation and how RCAN could support the process. The council discussed the elements of consultation including focus groups and questionnaires to be circulated to residents. Outcomes from the previous plan were also discussed, including successful initiatives such as the Village shop which had been developed as a result of the plan. The council stated that, given the need for public consultation on the Chequers Inn development, it would be useful to conduct wider consultation, through a Community Led Plan at the same time.

Parish Council were in agreement that the Community Led Plan was in need of updating and its scope widened to better inform current community need.

RCAN asked to submit a proposal for consideration at the next Parish Council meeting.

8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Questions were received from the public regarding the proposed Community Led Plan. The council expressed the need to ascertain what was achieved and what was missing from the previous plan in order to inform their own future proposals.

A question was posed to the council regarding the processes for bringing ideas to the council for consideration, specifically in relation to an idea for the installation of outside exercise equipment on the sports field. The Chairman advised that the best way to present ideas for consideration was to first write to the council which would then form part of the agenda for discussion within the meeting.

It was noted that this specific proposal would need permission from the Village Hall committee in the first instance, as the owners of the land.

Another question was received regarding the Sports Field, specifically concerning the provision of equipment for maintenance of the grounds. The council advised that a plan was needed outlining the land ownership, management, and maintenance needs of the sports field so that the issue could be discussed further.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

- Three complaints received regarding traffic on Top Street acknowledged by the Chairman. Discussed under Item 12.
- A Neighbourhood Watch questionnaire The chairman asked the council to research whether Elston had previously been active as a Neighbourhood Watch location and to identify key individuals who had been involved in it in order to ascertain whether the scheme needed re-establishing in the village.
- Correspondence in relation to a tree scheme run by Newark and Sherwood District Council, whereby the parish could apply for free trees. Upon question, it was agreed that more clarity was needed, in relation to the liability of the maintenance of them and the possible location for planting. To be an agenda item at the next meeting.
- Receipt of a letter from Cllr Sue Saddington confirming she would pursue concerns regarding the roadworks and resurfacing on Pinfold Lane, and traffic issues on Top Street. The correspondence also acknowledged the issue of a footpath between Pinfold Lane and the A46 but this has not been supported. The council agreed that the issues of safety when walking to the village from the A46 could be an area for consultation raised by a Community Led Plan.
- The National Association of Local Councils' (NALC) Annual General Meeting is to be held on November 21, 2019 at Epperstone Village Hall ,
- Information circulated from Nottinghamshire County Council regarding the Children Missing Education Strategy. Noted. .

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) Applications
 - i. Application for work on 19 The Spinney. Following consideration. The council voted, 6 in support, no objections.
- b) Decisions from Newark and Sherwood District Council
 - i. Brentwood Application was approved
 - ii. The council reported that an appeal had been lodged following the refusal of the application for development of land adjacent to Tu Pare on Low Street.

It was suggested at the close of this item of business that the Parish Council convene a sub-committee to manage planning applications submitted to the Council. The committee would consider proposals to bring back to the full council for approval.

11. PROGRESS REPORTS ON PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

a) Village Website

- i. Members of the council were asked whether they were happy to 'go live' with the newly designed Village website. Cllrs recognised the need to populate the content more fully before activating the website but agreed the format of the page.

The council expressed the need to recruit a volunteer from the village to co-ordinate the collection and accuracy of information for the population of the website. Cllr Murray to progress this item.

b) Sports Field

- i. It was reported to the council that a meeting was scheduled for Thursday November 14, 2019 to discuss the development of the Sports Field. The council suggested the need for the formation of an independent charitable organisation in order to secure funding for development projects. The previous clerk was reported to have been in contact with Nottinghamshire County Council regarding this development but no final conversation had taken place. The Chairman expressed the need to take these discussions forward. Cllr Clark agreed to ascertain the name of the contact at Notts C.C.

c) Gateway Village Signs

- i. An agreement was reached regarding the installation of Village signs. Whilst the County Council had agreed to install the signage, the Parish Council will own the signs and be responsible for their maintenance. Liability insurance was in place. The council were provided with a description of the new design for the signs as well as the specific locations for their installation. It was envisaged these would be in place by Christmas.

d) Village Hall and Church Lane Registration

- i. The council reported that a Statement of Truth had been requested from the Village Hall Committee but had not been received due to concerns regarding liabilities of the land. Cllr Clark proposed and Cllr Murray seconded a motion that the Parish Council indemnify the Village Hall Committee against any associated future costs. The motion was passed by 4 votes to one abstention. The council stated that they would write to the Village Hall's Committee asking for a Statement of Truth in return for indemnifying future costs Agenda for the next meeting for a summary of progress. .

e) Playground Gate

- i. Following an inspection of the playground the Council heard that the current gate could now be removed. The council discussed the associated risks of not replacing the gate in terms of the play space being open access and the risks associated with dog fouling and keeping children safe. Design plans for a new gate were presented to the council, which included modern safeguards to better prevent accident and injury. Cllrs agreed by 5 votes to 1 objection to remove and replace the gate. Cllr Clark to action.

The Chairman highlighted advice provided that regular playground inspection over and above the annual ROSPA inspection is recommended.

f) Adoption of Elston Parish Policies Previously Tabled

- i. Guidelines on Public Question Time
- ii. Code of Conduct of Members
- iii. Grant Applications and other Financial requests made of the Parish Council

Cllrs discussed the policies, which were adopted pending the appointment of a new clerk who would be asked to progress policy review and adoption procedures on behalf of the council.

g) VE Day Preparation

- i. The council highlighted the need to begin planning celebrations and events for the 75th Anniversary of VE Day on 8th May 2020. The Council suggested contacting District Councillors for support in planning VE Day celebrations.
A summary update would be brought for consideration within the next meeting.

12. ENVIRONMENT

a) Footpaths and Bridleway

- i. Council highlighted ongoing issues with requests from the Ramblers Society that historic footpaths should be reinstated. As a result some residents and landowners are affected by footpaths crossing their land. There are discussions in place between the Ramblers Society and Notts CC, which if not resolved will result in the Planning Inspectorate making a determination. A proposal to object to the resurrection of footpaths was not seconded.
- ii. A Cllr suggested placing concrete blocks on the Carrgate Lane bridleway to prevent vehicles accessing along the track. This was specifically in relation to a recent incident whereby a vehicle, fleeing from the police, had absconded along the Bridleway. It was proposed to write to Nottinghamshire County Council regarding this issue in order to establish ownership of the land, planning issues, and whether the bridleway could be obstructed in this way for safety reasons. Cllr Key to progress and draft an initial letter for Council approval.

Cllr Biddlecombe left meeting at 09:13pm.

b) Brecks Lane 'layby'

- i. Issues were raised regarding vehicles turning in the road, parking and fly-tipping in the Brecks Lane 'layby'. The Council raised discussion over whether it was a highways issue to which Cllr Ivor Walker suggested that the council write to Highways explaining the issues.

c) Top Street Traffic

- i. Chairman restated that three letters of complaint had been received which expressed the need for the reduction of the speed and weight limits for vehicles on Top Street. Both a 20mph speed limit and a 7.5 tonne weight limit were discussed by the Council This is now in hand with Notts CC (VIA) and we are awaiting contact to be made.

13. FINANCE

Authorisation of Payment of Accounts - signed and accepted by Council.
At the close of this item of business, the issue of broadband for the Village Hall was raised. A proposal was made to move to a contract for the provision of internet access in the Village Hall, this was passed unanimously.

14. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING – NOVEMBER 14, 2019

The following items were tabled for discussion at the next meeting.

- i. Elston Community Led Plan
- ii. Ownership of trees from Newark and Sherwood District Council
- iii. Sports Field Development

15. TO CONSIDER RESOLVING THAT UNDER SECTION 100 A (4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS ON THE BASIS IT WOULD LIKELY DISCLOSE EXEMPT INFORMATION

Members of the public were excluded from the meeting under section 100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 in order to discuss the following items of business on the grounds it would likely disclose exempt information:

A motion was passed prior to the discussion of these matters permitting Cllr Ivor Walker, Alex Raynor (RCAN), and Daniel Ewers (RCAN) to be present for these discussions.

- a) Confidential Minutes of the meeting held on September 10, 2019** were accepted as circulated and signed by the Chairman.

b) Recruitment of a new Clerk

Following explorations since the previous meeting, Cllr Murray proposed, and the chair seconded a motion that the Council agree to appoint a locum clerk for a two meeting period, pending the recruitment of a permanent clerk. Unanimously agreed.

In order to protect clerking arrangements Cllr Murray would seek to gain availability from the locum clerk as to availability for the New Year, should an appointment be delayed. It was agreed the recruitment would be for 8 hours per week at £15 per hour. This would be an agenda item for the next meeting.

c) The Chequers Inn

Cllr Dyer circulated supporting papers which summarised 'True Valuation' Figures for the purchase price of the property of a non- trading public house. Cllrs robustly discussed the business case for purchasing the property, the impact for the village and a 'fair offer' in line with the information tabled for consideration. Following serious consideration and negotiation regarding the level of offer the Council were happy to make. An offer of £260k was approved with 4 votes in favour and one abstention.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:40pm.