



# ELSTON

PARISH COUNCIL

Est: 1894



## MINUTES OF MEETING on THURSDAY

17 September 2020

Held Remotely by Zoom Webinar

**Present:** Cllrs Bertie Pinchera, Peter Clark, Rev Liz Murray, Michael Key, Matt Dyer and Sandra Wright

**In Attendance:** Lynda Ogilvie, Temp Clerk, District Councillor Ivor Walker and 29 members of the public.

### 1. Appointment of Locum Clerk

Lynda Ogilvie was appointed temporary Clerk to the Council. Proposed Cllr Clark, seconded Cllr Key, all voted in favour. The Responsible Finance Officer remains Mike Elliott

### 2. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence

### 3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 16 July 2020

The Minutes of the meeting on 16 July 2020 were approved as a correct record of the meeting. However, it was noted that Minute 10 gave the impression that the Chairman operated Facebook pages on behalf of the Council. This is not correct and it is hereby recorded that the Parish Council does not and never has had its own Facebook page. Such pages as refer to Parish Council business have been operated by the Chairman himself, and not on behalf of the Parish Council

### 4. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Pinchera declared a personal interest in Agenda Items 5 and 18(b)

Cllr Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 10.

### 5. Vote of No Confidence in Chairman

Cllr Pinchera read a short statement, stating that he had already said all he wished to say on the matter, but he considered this issue to be political. Having declared a personal interest in this item, he then left the virtual meeting.

Cllr Clark referred to recent behaviour of the Chairman which had shocked so many people in the community, as well as fellow parish councillors. He noted that the Chairman was proactive on the council, but recent behaviour, especially in reference to the last parish council meeting, was not becoming of the Chair of the Parish Council and brought the whole council into disrepute.

Cllr Key said that he had visited one of the people whose overgrown hedge had been one of those singled out by the Chairman. He was pleased to see that a young man from the village had cut the hedge and wished to express his thanks to this young man.

Cllr Clark proposed a vote of no confidence in the Chairman of the Parish Council, seconded by Cllr Dyer, and approved unanimously.

*(Cllr Pinchera returned to the meeting.)*

## **6. District and County Councillor Report**

Cllr Saddington was not present at the meeting.

Cllr Walker referred to upcoming major developments in the district, which include the following:

- Development of international airspace and training space to create new jobs locally and nationally;
- Development of a construction college to create pathways for upskilling local people;
- YMCA and Newark and Sherwood community and activity village to provide learning and leisure activities;
- Transforming Newark town to make it more accessible for pedestrians and cyclists
- Completion of the Southern Relief Road, and upgrade of the A46

Fly tipping has become a problem in the district and resources are being used to tackle this. Elston, Thorpe and Farndon have been particularly badly affected. The District Council has now purchased three new cameras, and the officers will consider if any of the cameras can be deployed in the local area.

Cllr Walker was asked if cameras had to be visible, and gave the response that they could be hidden.

## **7. Public Question Time**

A resident questioned Agenda Item 5, as the Chairman had not been present. Chairman explained that it was his decision to recuse himself.

Another resident mentioned the speed of traffic on Pinfold Lane, especially considering the lack of visibility. Chairman responded that this is a Highways matter, and is being looked into.

A resident noted that the Petition for a Faculty Notice which will need to be displayed in the Church when it is received should also be more widely distributed around the village so that more people can see it. Chairman said that this would be done.

## **8. Facebook – to confirm that the Council does not operate pages on Facebook**

Council felt it necessary to confirm that the Parish Council itself has never operated pages on facebook. Chairman confirmed that he had run a parish facebook page, but that this was not on behalf of the parish council, although some parish council documents had been posted.

## 9. Correspondence

An email regarding a hole in the hedge between the Sports Field and a neighbouring field had been opened up, and the owner of the neighbouring field requested that it be closed up. This is being addressed by members of the football club, and Clerk was asked to write to neighbour and explain how the matter is being dealt with.

## 10. War Memorial – Update

Cllr Murray had declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item.

Clerk relayed information she had received from the Diocese regarding the display of Notices on the Petition when they are received. Council reaffirmed the need to display the notices around the parish, and on the website. People who objected to the Petition could write to the Diocese explaining the reasons for their objections.

## 11. Finance – Authorisation of Payment of Accounts

- a) Payment sheet 5 – for approval and signature

This was approved unanimously

## 12. Governance Documents (motion attached)

Chairman referred to his paper in which he proposes that the Council looks at its governance procedures, and updates those it already has, and also develops new policies as required for a council of its size.

This motion was proposed by Cllr Pinchera, seconded by Cllr Clark, all in favour.

## 13. Sports Field –

- a) grant application from Elston FC

It was confirmed that this grant application has been withdrawn.

Cllr Pinchera noted that hedges on the field need to be trimmed back and this is the responsibility of the Council. Cost is estimated to be around £250. Cllr Pinchera proposed that this work is undertaken, seconded by Cllr Clark, and unanimously approved.

- b) outcome of public consultation

Jim Sweeting and Wayne Eason joined the meeting to present Council with information on the outcome of the recent consultation on developments on the Sports Field. Mr Eason went through a slide presentation of the consultation, which demonstrated that the village was evenly divided between those who supported the proposed installation of pavilion-style changing facilities and those who opposed it. However, there were a number of concerns expressed and a major consideration is that anything built on the field should not challenge existing services, such as the village shop, village hall, and the pub when it reopens. There is also concern about raising the funds for a large pavilion. *(A copy of the findings will be placed on the Parish Website within the Parish Council drop down menu.)*

- c) next steps

Some portacabins have become available and are being offered to the football club free for use as changing facilities. There will be some costs for transportation of the portacabins, groundwork for the site, and installing appropriate services. These costs could amount to £65-70,000, but it is hoped that a grant will be made available from the Football Association, which may cover up to 75% of the cost. The portacabins will have a potential lifespan of 10 years.

Cllr Pinchera proposed adoption of the results of the consultation, seconded by Cllr Clark, and approved unanimously. Mr Eason was thanked for putting the slide presentation together, and the analysis of all the returns.

Cllr Clark proposed that the Council support the preparation of drawings and a planning application up to £1,500. Cllr Biddlecombe seconded this proposal.

Cllr Murray proposed that Cllrs Wright, Biddlecombe and Clark continue to work with members of the football club on the development of the planning applications. All members supported this.

Before putting Cllr Clark's proposal to a vote, Cllr Pinchera proposed an amendment which is to prepare plans and drawings, inform Nottinghamshire County Council and seek their agreement, compile accurate costs, communicate with residents on next steps, and bring the matter back to the Parish Council with plans and full costings.

Before this amendment was taken to a vote, Cllr Dyer proposed that the village should be consulted with new plans including accurate costings and also cost to individual households. Proposal seconded by Cllr Murray. 3 votes in favour, 4 against, therefore this proposal failed.

Chairman returned to his amendment, which was seconded by Cllr Wright, and all councillors voted in favour.

Chairman then returned to Cllr Clark's original proposal and put this to the vote. All councillors voted in favour, therefore the motion was carried. with Cllr. Pinchera's amendments.

In Summary Council AGREED to:

1. Prepare plans and drawings for submission to the N&S Planning Department for approval. Up to £1,500 was approved for the work
2. Inform Notts CC, the landowner, and seek their approval
3. Compile accurate costs for the project
4. Communicate with residents on the agreed next steps
5. Return to Council at its next meeting with an update on points 1-4.

It was agreed Cllr Clark will sign, on behalf of the Parish Council, the hire agreement between the Parish Council and the Football Club agreed by Council with an amendment at July 2020 meeting.

#### **14. Environment**

##### **a) Playground – maintenance as per RoSPA report and costs**

Cllr Wright said that she had compiled a list of work which needed to be done, and most was completed. There is some groundwork which still needs attention and this will incur some costs. There is also a problem with the scramble nets, which either need repair, or replacement at a cost of £1100.

Chairman expressed concern that no work had been approved, and the Council would be liable if anything goes wrong. It was agreed that RoSPA would be invited back to assess the repair work when it is completed.

Some strimming has taken place near some of the equipment, and this has the potential to cause damage. Gardener to be asked to avoid strimming near equipment.

Cllrs Wright and Biddlecombe were thanked for their work on this, and for engaging with residents for additional help.

##### **b) Gateway signs update**

These are due to be installed at the end of September.

c) Creation of Volunteer Group in the parish (motion attached)

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

(9.40 pm – Cllr Biddlecombe left the meeting.)

**15. Planning Applications**

**a. Planning Applications**

20/01485/FUL Lineham House

No Objections

**b. Newark & Sherwood DC decisions on applications and appeals**

There are no decisions to note.

**16. Change meeting dates**

Cllr Murray proposed that the Parish Council revert to meeting bi-monthly, seconded by Cllr Wright, and approved (4 members in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention)

**17. Review of Delegated Authority**

Cllr Clark proposed that the Delegated Authority continue until May when it could be reviewed again, seconded by Cllr Murray, all in favour.

**18. 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**

It was so resolved (unanimous)

**a) Recruitment of New Clerk**

Members approved a recommendation from Cllr Murray (seconded Cllr Wright) that Cathryn Crane should be re-employed as Clerk to the Council. Start date will be 1 October 2020, on the same terms as previously. Council will also ensure that she is fully supported and provided with adequate and appropriate training.

Cllr Pinchera proposed that Lynda Ogilvie be retained to support and advise the new Clerk until March 2021. Proposal seconded by Cllr Clark, and approved unanimously.

**b) Data Protection Breach**

Clerk reported that the Monitoring Officer had referred to a potential data protection breach and suggested that the Council may wish to consider if a breach has taken place, and if so, whether the Council should self-refer to the Information Commission Office. As the alleged breach was in connection with Facebook posts, and as the Council has confirmed that it does not operate Facebook pages, it was agreed that the Council was not responsible for any possible breach, therefore no action was required.

**c) Data Protection Officer**

At the present time, the Parish Council does not have a Data Protection Officer. This should be someone independent of the Council. Some names of possible candidates were suggested, and these will be followed up.

**19. Date and Time of next meeting**

Thursday, 12 November 2020

Chairman closed the meeting at 10.35 pm