



**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting
Monday 14th September 2015
7pm at Elford Village Hall.**

Present: Councillors Wain (Chair), Gilbert, Smith, Standerwick and Turley

In Attendance: Mrs Jones (Clerk), one member of the public

Notice and quorum: Due notice of the meeting had been given and a quorum of Councillors was present. The Chair declared the meeting open.

Open Forum

A member of the public asked about the progress of the Home Farm planning appeal. The Chair said that the Parish Council representations had been submitted to the Inspectorate and that more information about the progress of the appeal would be available in due course.

1. To receive apologies for absence

Cllr Collins had apologised as he was on holiday, his apology was accepted.

Cllr Taylor had contacted the Chair to resign from the Parish Council. His resignation was accepted with regret. Thanks would be sent to him for his service to the Parish Council and his contribution to Elford.

The Clerk would put up the Vacancy Notice as soon as possible.

Resolved: Approved

2. To appoint a Vice Chair and to appoint members of Committees and representatives to other organisations

Cllr Standerwick was nominated by Cllr Wain and it was RESOLVED unanimously that he would serve as Vice- Chair.

The following members and representatives were agreed:

Finance Committee members; Cllrs Wain, Collins

Sportsfield Committee members; Cllrs Gilbert, Standerwick, Smith

Playground Committee Members; Cllrs Gilbert, Standerwick, Smith

Planning Member, Cllr Wain

Hall Gardens Member, Cllr Turley

School Liaison Member, Cllr Standerwick

The Village Hall Member would be agreed after a new Cllr was co-opted.

Resolved: Approved

3. To receive Declarations of Interest and to consider written requests from Councillors for the Council to grant a dispensation

None received

4. To approve the Minutes of the meetings of 13/7/15 and 28/8/15

Resolved: Approved

5. To receive the Clerk's report

Best Kept Village – Elford had been placed third and the Parish Council thanked everyone who had helped achieve this good result. The Judges' comments would be available soon.

Life Saving training – This had been organised for the 21st September.

Archives – The Minute Books from 1985 to 1995 had been deposited with Staffordshire Archives. The whereabouts of Minutes pre - 1985 were unknown.

Welcome Pack – This had now been updated and would be sent to newer residents.

Village Vending – No further information had been received and the firm would be contacted for an update.

Police – A new liaison officer was in place to monitor attendance at meetings.

Buses – The 17.35 service from Tamworth had been withdrawn.

Footpath de-icing – This would no longer take place as no-one had come forward to take on this task, and conditions were rarely appropriate. Cllr Gilbert would liaise with Mr Burgess and arrange storage of the gritting machine and saline sprayer. Cllr Standerwick would contact the school to ask if they wished to use this equipment.

6. To receive the Clerk's report on planning issues

No applications had been received.

7. To receive an update on the Home Farm appeal

The Parish Council had appointed consultants to prepare its representations to the Inspectorate, which had now been submitted. The Inspectorate had been asked for the appeal to proceed via an Inquiry but had not yet responded. The Appeals procedure was discussed; it was thought that it would take over three months before a decision was made. It was agreed to pay the fees of the consultants appointed by the Parish Council and by the Action Group as these were within the sum agreed at the previous meeting.

Resolved: Approved

8. To resolve that Elford Parish Council meets the criteria for eligibility to use the General Power of Competence (*Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012*)

The Clerk had now passed the Certificate in Local Council Administration; however the Council did not meet the eligibility criteria of having two thirds of Councillors elected rather than co-opted, and so was unable to resolve to use this power.

9. To consider the Neighbourhood Plan

Elford had now been designated a Neighbourhood Plan area. The Parish Council would apply for funding, and would contact local planning consultants to request presentations to Councillors on the preparation of the Plan. *Action: Clerk*

Resolved: Approved

10. To consider playground maintenance

A quote of £400 for tree surgery on the oak tree had been received; this work would not be done at present. The smaller trees had been removed to increase visibility and topsoil would be laid down to make the surface safer at that site. The annual inspection had been ordered. Cllr Standerwick would ask the handyman to renovate the boat and would contact interested people to arrange a working party to do maintenance tasks. Cllrs Standerwick, Gilbert and Smith would meet at the playground and report back to the next meeting on what was required.

It had been previously suggested that a skate park would be a welcome facility for older children from the village, but this was too expensive at present. Cllrs would visit Whittington’s BMX park to see if such a facility would be appropriate on the Sportsfield.

Resolved: Approved

11. To consider tasks for the Neighbourhood Highways Team

Cllrs would contact the Clerk with suggestions.

12. To receive questions and reports from Councillors

Cllr Turley asked about speeding past the houses on the A513, near the Harlaston junction and this would be reported to Staffordshire Highways.

Cllr Smith asked about the surface of the car park at the entrance to the Sportsfield. The Football Club were undertaking further work there, so this could be dealt with then.

13. To receive correspondence

- SPCA bulletins, details of financial and planning training
- Tamworth and District Civic Society relaunch
- Staffordshire Police, partnership role
- National Grid, overhead power line maintenance
- Lichfield District Council, consultation on licensing policy
- Community Council AGM and Annual Report
- Staffordshire Playing Fields Association Annual Report and appeal for subscription
- Sainsbury’s fund raising card

14. To receive the financial report.

- (a) The bank reconciliation was noted.
- (b) Budget figures for the half year were examined, and showed an expected surplus over the year.
- (c) The Clerk’s salary would be raised to the next pay scale point as she had passed the professional qualification.
- (d) Online banking should be arranged, the Clerk would investigate transferring the funds from the Coop Bank to Unity Trust Bank.
- (e) The Lloyds Bank playground account was now finally updated with Cllrs Wain and Gilbert as signatories and the Clerk nominated to administer the account.
- (f) Cllr Gilbert offered to check the electricity meter as the bills had been estimated during the year and seemed high.

Resolved: Approved

15. To consider authorising schedule of accounts for payment.

Payments to: M. Jones, total salary and expenses July and August; £729.39

M. Jones, reimburse payment to D. Beaumont for work in July £110

D. Beaumont, handyman work August £120;

RW Harcombe, maintenance, July and August £250;

Elford Village Hall, Room hire, July, £113.50;

Grant Thornton, Audit Fee, £120

Scottish Power, Playground electricity, £24.93

Resolved: Approved

16. Date of next meeting.

Tuesday 13th October (moved from Monday due to Harvest Festival)

The meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.