



**Minutes of Sportsfield Committee Meeting  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017  
7.30 pm at Elford Village Hall.**

**Present:** Councillors Gilbert, Collins, and Jones (Chair),  
Cricket Club, Steph Tavinor, David Philpott;  
Football Club, Mark Simmonds  
**In Attendance:** Mrs Jones (Clerk)

**1. To receive apologies for absence.**

Paul Bozward, Cricket Club

**2. To consider legal issues regarding the underleases.**

The Chair referred to the two 2014 underleases between the Parish Council and the clubs, this did not reflect current practice, and stated that the cricket pitch should only be used for cricket. The 1990 Lease referred to the enjoyment of all sporting activity, the Parish Council had a duty to make sure that everyone could enjoy recreation and sport at the field. It was agreed to send everyone the leases, which would be redrafted in 2020, or earlier if improved wording regarding the users could be agreed.

**3. To consider complaints about nuisance from residents and solutions which can be implemented regarding traffic, parking, noise, litter and facilities.**

Regarding residents' complaints and solutions:

- **Traffic and Parking** - The Football Club has asked parents to cooperate. Football has reduced in the village since last season, with no more than 4 teams playing on a Saturday morning. Mark works with the Tamworth Junior League to try to limit the fixtures. This season he has varied start times so that arrival and departure of vehicles is staggered. Tournaments have now ceased as it was recognised that they created traffic problems. Summer training has been changed to two evenings per week, rather than all on one evening. Some of the teams now train in Tamworth instead of their home ground. It was also recognised that an aggregate of the vehicles coming through the village was due to cricket too. PC offered to help with signage to warn drivers of traffic approaching from Elford Park and to drive slowly through the village. It was also suggested that some signs should be considered, setting out a code of conduct (e.g. respectful of noise levels, picking up litter etc) and also warning visitors of

both clubs to drive slowly and to take care whilst driving through the village and to avoid blocking entrances, or parking in an inconsiderate manner.

- **Noise** – Mark rarely heard any bad language but on just a few occasions had to remind individual parents that it was not acceptable. The Chair concurred with Mark in that he had not witnessed bad language, and David agreed everyone was polite. Could pitches further from the houses be used? – this creates a problem with wear on the ground, there were already compromises on where teams play.
- **Litter** – FC do frequent litter picks and would ask players/coaches to help. Not all litter is FC's fault. PC offered to address this with suitable signage.
- **Toilets** – The Football Club have access to toilets if 2 key holders are present, and have key to changing facilities and lock up.
- **Storage** – Large goals locked away to stop use by non-footballers for safety reasons. Nets sometimes left in place (these are understood to be PC goals), Mike said residents had concerns that this could be a H&S issue. FC has no access to the sheds, and is reluctant to buy a container until the issues are resolved. CC now have key holders as required by insurers. CC said area behind the pavilion will be tidied over the winter and a skip used.

#### **4. To consider number of football matches and training sessions and how to improve notification of residents.**

Is there any leeway to have less football? The Football Club have addressed this as last season 14 teams were playing at Elford. This has been reduced to ten this year with 6 younger aged teams playing on the Cricket Field and 4 teams playing on the Football Field. There are a number of older teams which now play elsewhere. No more than 4 teams play on a Saturday in Elford (with staggered kick off times).

Residents are concerned about traffic management. In total there are about 100 home side players of various ages, and there are estimated to be about 100 cars in and out over the entirety of each weekend. Match kick off times have been changed this season so to stagger the number of vehicles arriving/departing the village at the same time.

Mike asked about parking in The Avenue and Mark would let the PC know if this was likely to happen again so that the Church could be notified in case they required the parking for a wedding etc.

#### **5. To consider use of cricket pitch by football teams and contribution to maintenance.**

The CC Committee have agreed to FC using cricket outfield, although they did have complaints from some CC members. They were not in favour of the Licence, which was previously proposed, as they feared this would limit their ability to be able to prevent the use of the pitch by the FC if problems arose in the future. CC charge FC £400 a year for grass cutting. David said they weren't wholly reliant on the FC's money although it was appreciated.

In addition to the £400 per annum the FC contribute to the CC, the FC spend c.£400 on grass seed and fertiliser, plus further sums for line marking, additional mowing and net replacement; in total around £2,000 a year maintenance costs plus volunteer time. The CC had no complaints about the pitch condition when it was returned to the CC in March for the new season. The FC could play in Tamworth for less but the FC serves the wider

Mease Valley, especially those villages that don't have football facilities. Local children want to play here, and the village and the wider Mease Valley would suffer the loss of this community facility which has been home to Elford Boys FC for around 35 years. On average a third of players are from Elford and surrounding villages, approximately 10 are currently from the village. Some of the young footballers had also joined the junior cricket team, and so contributed to the sustainability of the cricket club.

**6. To request evidence of Public Liability Insurance.**

The teams had supplied the paperwork to the Clerk; they were covered wherever the teams played.

**7. AOB**

Mark said that he had received a grant for a defibrillator which would be sited in the pavilion (the FC would fund the shortfall of the defibrillator).

The FC were also appreciative of the £250 gift they received this year from the Scarecrow Committee. The CC did not receive a gift this year.

Mark expressed his concern about derogatory remarks, and disputed some of the assertions by residents quoted in the open forum section of the Parish Council minutes of September 11<sup>th</sup>. He has lived in Elford for 35 years and done a lot for the village. Both clubs had agreed on the need for a further pitch near the corner of the field nearest the school, the dip could be filled and this would help mitigate wear and tear. Both clubs regularly discuss matters arising and are making good progress in working together.

The Chair said that the PC need to come up with ideas of how they can help the enjoyment and longevity of both clubs whilst also addressing the views and concerns of some Elford resident, and felt the meeting had been very useful.

The Clerk would circulate the minutes, and the matter would be on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

**Minutes Sportsfield Committee 11.10.17**

**Signed: Chair..... Date .....**