

Parish Councillors present: Stephen Curtis, Yvonne Howard, Brenda Poole, Mark Purchase, Michael Pearson, Julian McCourt, Roland Fry, Lloyd Groves (Chair), Mike Wiles, Mick White and Phil Leakey. Also present: Kate Bennett (Parish Clerk), County Councillor Dawson and Borough Councillor Crofts

**1 Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Dan Finnis and Harry Humphrey.

**3 Members' Declarations of Interests in items on the agenda and any dispensations required considered**

No declarations of interests were given and no dispensations were required.

**4 Open Forum for Public Participation: 15 minutes**

The Chairman of the Playing Field Committee provided an update on recent projects at the playing field including the refurbishment of the smaller children's play area, works to the car park to try to improve the condition of it and the building of new dug outs (which were sponsored).

Councillor Dawson reported that a planning application for the incinerator had not yet been received but he would keep all updated with this proposal as and when there are any developments. Councillor Dawson donated a couple of trees to the parish council in respect of the possible new woodland area/picnic area for the playing field.

Councillor Dawson and Alex Lane left the meeting.

**5 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

It was resolved to accept the Minutes of the last meeting as a true record and these were signed by the Chairman.

**6 Clerk to provide an update on matters not included on this month's Agenda**

- a) No further information has been made available yet regarding Planning Application 21/01569/F proposed change of use from a hotel to a large house of multiple occupancy at Elme Hall, 69 Elm High Road, Emneth which the parish council has objected to.
- b) A bid has been submitted to the Norfolk County Council's 2022/23 Parish Partnership Scheme for a replacement bus shelter at Elm High Road opposite the junction of Elmfield Drive.
- c) Applications are being invited from the Borough Council for qualifying local projects to apply for funding for between £2,000-£50,000 via their *Community Infrastructure Levy* fund; see website for details [News Articles \(emnethparishcouncil.org.uk\)](https://www.emnethparishcouncil.org.uk)

**7 Finance**

- a) It was resolved to approve all outstanding payments per the November payments list.
- b) Income since the last meeting was noted at £7,089.55 (agricultural land rents) and £1,400.50 (cemetery).
- c) It was resolved with all in favour to increase the precept to £39,000.00 for 2022/23 as recommended by the Finance Working Group following their meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 when the 2022/23 Budget figures as prepared by the Clerk had been considered.

The national living wage increases to £9.50 per hour in April 2022, energy prices have increased, a budget figure has been introduced to cover the annual maintenance costs for the defibrillators in the

village and also for anticipated maintenance costs (i.e. tree felling, treatment of giant hogweed etc.) at the former canal towpath as well as a cost for replacing the bus shelter at Elm High Road.

It was resolved to *not* subscribe to the Norfolk Association of Local Councils for 2022/23 providing a saving of £451.00. This will be reviewed next year at budget setting time.

It was suggested that the annual British Telecom charges of £720.00 for the phoneline and Wifi at the village hall should be a *village hall cost* and not one to the tax payer; Councillor Purchase (who is also Vice Chairman of the Village Hall Committee) inferred that the Village Hall Committee would not be prepared to take this cost on; Clerk to investigate if there are any other more competitive options available for this service before any further discussion over ownership of the costs takes place.

It was also suggested that the annual Village Hall hire costs to the parish were quite high and asked if the Village Hall Committee could revisit their pricing for the parish council and find a way to reduce these for them.

- d) Balance of the Current Account at 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 was £59,907.40 and the balance of the Claude Coates fund, £35,035.86

## 8 Planning

- a) To consider planning applications since last meeting;

**Planning Application 1:** Planning application 21/02025/F, demolition of existing dwelling (vicarage) and erection of new vicarage plus two dwellings at 72 Church Road, Emneth; it was resolved to *object* to this application based on *alien in character in the locality being so close to a Grade 1 listed church, over-intensive development and part of the proposal being too close to a nearby dyke*.

- b) It was noted that there has been little progress on the new development of 117 dwellings at Elm High Road (behind B&Q) for over three months now and the entrance to the site is in a poor state of repair.
- c) To note any planning appeal notifications since last meeting; no report.
- d) To note any decisions from the Borough Council since last meeting:  
Planning application 21/01770/F The Arches, 15 Church Road, Emneth; proposed extension to rear of existing dwelling; *permitted*.
- e) The presentation from the recent Planning Update Session hosted by the Borough Council had previously been circulated to all councillors for their information.

## 9 To discuss Parish matters

- a) The principle of installing an electric vehicle charging point at the village hall was discussed; it was resolved to defer any further discussion over this idea for at least another six months.

## 10 Cemetery Issues

- a) It was resolved to purchase a new bench for the cemetery from Amazon at £239.00. This will be delivered to Councillor Leakey's home address and assembled by Councillor Leakey and Councillor Fry. The plaque from the old bench to be removed and screwed to the new one.
- b) The original owner of burial plot P16 has been reimbursed his £400.00 non-resident exclusive rights of burial fee for the mix up with burial plots P15a and P16 last month and these costs have been reimbursed to the parish council by Richard King grave diggers.
- c) No further progress has been made yet regarding prices for a columbarium wall.

- d) Full grave burials are being offered to *residents* of the parish *only* as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020<sup>1</sup>. It should be noted that the provision of cemetery services within a parish is a discretionary service.

**11 Allotment Land issues**

- a) All but one of the land rent invoices have now been paid for the year; payment for the one outstanding invoice is expected by the end of this week.

**12 To discuss Village Hall issues**

- a) A CCTV camera has been installed in the front car park; the rear one will be fitted when a wifi extender to provide coverage to the rear and the correct batteries have been purchased.

**13 To discuss Playing Field issues**

- a) Councillor Groves outlined a proposal to introduce a new woodland/picnic area at the playing field in a bid to a) support current initiatives to plant more trees and b) to encourage biodiversity in the area; he also reported an idea to replace the 90 poplar trees that were removed last year with a mixture of roughly ten new oak and horse chestnut trees. He had received a quote of £35.00 per tree including a tree guard, a post and tree tie plus £200.00 for labour to plant the trees. In principle it was felt that this was a good idea but further investigation and discussion is required.

**14 To discuss Norfolk County Council issues including highways**

- a) Councillor Wiles reported the uneven road edge outside his property at Elmside.  
b) It was noted that the posts and wires bordering some land owned by Poplar Nurseries in the village need straightening up; Councillor Leahey agreed to action this with the owners.

**15 To receive a report from the County Councillor;** see item 4 of these Minutes.

**16 To receive a report from the Borough Councillor**

- a) Applications are being invited to the *Community Infrastructure Levy* fund for qualifying projects.  
b) Funding of £190,000.00 has been provided for fly tipping issues including the provision of an electric vehicle for collections.  
c) The renewing of the Gambling Act legislation is taking place this year.  
d) There have been changes to council tax charges for *empty properties*.

**17 To note any communications from the Police since last meeting**

- a) Our Community Engagement Officer is Paula Gilluley [paula.gilluley@norfolk.police.uk](mailto:Paula.gilluley@norfolk.police.uk)  
b) Residents are encouraged to report any anti-social behaviour issues on the Police 101 non-urgent number.

**18 Items for the next meeting agenda**

- Village Hall hire costs
- British Telecom charges
- Playing Field Caretaker contract

Borough Councillor Crofts left the meeting.

**19 To consider excluding the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the confidential nature of the items to be discussed**

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<sup>1</sup> Ashes interments are still permitted to non-residents, just full grave burials restricted to *residents* only

**20 To discuss recent unexpected maintenance works at the towpath and the condition of a silver birch**

- a) Clerk to try and determine exactly *who* carried out the recently reported maintenance works at two sections of the towpath; was it *Friends of Elm & Emneth towpath* or A. N. Other?
- b) Once the location of the silver birch reported by Elm Parish Council is identified a quote can be sought for the necessary works required.

**21 To discuss particulars of the Playing Field Caretaker's contract**

- a) The particulars in question were discussed; Councillor Groves agreed to action and report back at the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021 meeting.
- b) Councillor Fry raised concern that permission had not been sought from the Parish Council before the replacement dug outs were installed and requested clarification on how much autonomy the Playing Field Committee had without requiring Parish Council consideration.

**22 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021<sup>2</sup> at 6.30pm in the Committee Room at Central Hall. This will be a short meeting dealing with Finance and urgent issues only.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm

Chairman's signature .....

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<sup>2</sup> Apologies received from Councillor McCourt , Councillor White and Councillor Poole