

ELSWORTH PARISH

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in Elsworth C of E School May 18th 2022 at 6:30pm

The meeting was chaired by Mr Peter Deer, Chairman of the Parish Council.

Those present

Fourteen parishioners attended the meeting along with District Councillor Mark Howell

1. Apologies for absence:

County Councillor Mandy Smith, Victoria McNeill

2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting April 20th 2019

The minutes were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Chairman's address to the meeting

Peter Deer noted that the pandemic had meant the cancellation of the Annual Parish Meeting since 2019 and that now there was a very different membership of the Parish Council. He thanked retiring members of the council, Alison Brolls, Rob Askham and David Pope for their contributions to the work of the Parish Council over the past three years. He also paid tribute to Nick Wright who retired as District Councillor after eighteen years' service. Peter Deer highlighted the activities of the Parish Council over the past year, noting that that council members were focussing on being proactive:

- After the PC elections in May 2022 only four of the previous council remained: Peter Deer, Victoria McNeil, Margaret Stevenson and James Witherow. There was no ballot as only five people stood for council. James Howell will join the council at the AGM meeting. The PC allocation of Members is nine which leaves four places vacant.
- The council continued to liaise with County Highways over the state of the roads in the village.
- The new car park for the shop and the sports field had been completed and new gates installed
- The area around the village sign had been improved and the bus shelter had been re-thatched and the woodwork repaired
- Speed signs were now in place at two sites in the village, monitoring both speed and volume of traffic
- A new volunteer warden for Fardell's Lane Reserve had been appointed
- The Parish Council was supporting the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations by underwriting the costs by £1,000.00
- Two Jubilee trees were to be planted- a disease resistant Elm in Fardell's Lane reserve and a crab apple in the school grounds. A grant from the District Council of £275 had been obtained towards the purchase of the trees and wildflower seeds for the children of Elsworth School. Once grown on the plants would be transplanted into Fardell's Lane Reserve.

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- Plans for the renewal of play equipment on the sports field were well underway. Two generous donations had been received, one from a current parishioner and one from the Wakelin family. This donation had originally been made by Mr John Walkelin, who had stipulated that it be used for getting full post office services back in the village following the closure of the post office on The Causeway. This had not proved possible. Following Mr Wakelin's passing, consultations were held with the family who agreed that the funds should be used towards the refurbishment of the play area. The old slide would be retained but all other equipment was to be removed. Thanks were expressed to Margaret Stevenson, Rob Askham for the planning of the new area and to James Witherow and Anthony Taylor was bringing in equipment to remove the old structures and concrete base. The play area is to be named "the Jubilee play area"
- A plea was made for a new editor for the Elsworth Times. This is a popular magazine with residents. The publication is supported financially by the Parish Council but it is not a Parish Council publication. At present, in the absence of an editor, this was being edited by the Clerk.
- The Parish Council is involved with representing views on many issues outside the village which have a direct impact on the village. The bombshell of proposals for a station north of the A428 for the East West rail project with the additional proposals for ten thousand houses, freight yards, car parks and lighting was one such issue that has been vigorously opposed. A questionnaire sent to all households overwhelmingly rejected the plan for a station to the north of the A428 and proposed that it should be south of the A428 for easier access. The Parish Council is supporting a campaign to get a business case for the station undertaken. David Pope will continue to be involved over this on behalf of the Parish Council. Elsworth and District Facebook page has links to the EWR sites. EWR is proposing to report at the end of the year.
- The Chairman thanked the Clerk for her continued hard work and recognised that she takes on more than is required in the definition of the role of Clerk and Financial Officer for the council

4. Summary of Elsworth's income and expenditure for year ending March 31st 2022

Liz Sim, the Parish Clerk, presented a summary of income and expenditure for the financial year ending March 2022, a copy of which is appended to these minutes. She outlined in detail a breakdown of costs. The Parish Council intended to use all the funds from section 106 agreements for the renewal of the play area as well as monies from its general funds. The precept for the coming year had been minimally increased by £1,000 and expenditure was expected to rise considerably in the current climate.

5 Question Time

A question was put to those present as to whether the publication of the Elsworth Times was worth continuing. There was unanimous agreement that it should continue.

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Sue Taylor agreed to take over as editor for the coming year. The question as to whether the publication would continue after that would be put to the Annual Parish Meeting in 2023.

Reports from village organisations of their past year's activities would be submitted to the June edition of the Elsworth Times.

Lawrence Seifert asked if a long term memorial to the Queen's jubilee – possibly a bench could be purchased.

It was noted that there was more opportunity to obtain trees for planting for the jubilee but the parish council has no land to plant them on.

The Chairman declared the formal meeting closed at 19:10

Signed _____(Chairman). Date _____