

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF ELTISLEY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 14th MAY 2024 AT 6.50PM.**

PRESENT:

Cllr S Ellis (Chairman)
5 Parish Councillors
2 members of the public
County Councillor M Smith
SCDC Cllr Sandford
Mrs A Jackson (Parish Clerk)

Cllr S Ellis chaired the meeting in Cllr D Stevenson's absence.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Cllr M Lines – personal
Cllr D Stevenson – personal
Mrs S Sills - personal

2. Minutes of the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting.

Resolved: That they be signed as a true and correct record. (Prop Cllr R Pinner, 2nd Cllr A Weldon) All in favour

3. Report of the Council.

Cllr S Ellis read out the report of the Council. No questions were raised.
See Appendix A

Resolved: That the report be accepted. All in favour

4. Financial Report of the Council.

Clerk read out a report on behalf of the Council – See Appendix B.

Resolved: That the report be accepted. All in favour

5. Eltisley Village Green Trust Report.

Clerk read out a report on behalf of the Eltisley Village Green Trust – See Appendix B

6. Cade Management Committee Report.

The attached report was handed out.

See Appendix C

7. Newton Primary School Report.

The attached report was handed out.

See Appendix D.

8. Report from District Councillor.

Cllr P Sandford advised that District Councillor M Howell remains on medical leave and any issues to contact him. Cllr Sandford gave an overview of District Councillor position. In particular he commented that the District Council is solvent with finances breaking even. The precept was increased by £5 for a Band D property. There are no planned cuts to services.

The District Council has employed two new environmental officers and purchased a truck to deal with fly tipping. Any instances of fly tipping can be reported online, and the officers will check for any evidence to link back to the fly tipper.

More money is being allocated to the Zero Carbon Communities Grant for applications from allotments or public gardens for amounts up to £500.

Improvements are being made to the District Council website.

Planning and Development is taking a lot of time. The Bourne Airfield development is on hold due to not enough water to sustain the development; a new reservoir is due to be constructed.

The 4-day trial for the office staff has finished and the District Council await the report. The staff will remain on 4-days until the decision whether to continue is made. The waste collection staff remain on a 4-day week until October this is going well.

He advised that climate change grants are available.

The East-West rail are holding out reach events for consultation until 2025.

A resident raised concerns regarding the amount of building that is happening in Cambridgeshire that in his opinion is detrimental to the countryside and agriculture.

A second resident commented that he thought Addenbrookes new Cancer hospital was on hold for the same reason as Bourne Airfield.

Cllr P Sandford advised these developments remain on hold until the water situation is addressed.

Cllr S Ellis queried whether it would be possible to apply for the ZCC grant to repair fences at Eltisley allotments.

Cllr P Sandford replied this could potentially qualify for the grant and will send the details to the Clerk.

9. Report from County Councillor.

CCC Cllr M Smith commented that the Parish Council have had lots of meetings with Highways regarding the A428. The Parish Council have put forward a list of traffic calming suggestions and are awaiting an update. Legacy funding is available for projects.

CCC are now following no mow May and commented that some people like it and some don't. The Eltisley junction has been cut but has been reported as dangerous due to limited visibility – Highways England will check and cut the verge further if necessary.

CCC is still a joint administration operating on the committee scheme. CCC are working with other organisations for example:

- Trading Standards worked together with CCC to seize illegal vapes and tobacco products in Ely.
- Music for Schools, CCC are working with the Arts Council of England and are able to access more funding for instruments in schools.

Green agenda – Councils can express an interest in vehicle charging units for public areas.

A resident raised concerns over major potholes appearing due to a collapsed drain.

CCC Cllr M Smith advised there is a new Highways Officer in post, and these should be repaired soon.

Cllr S Ellis commented that the Drainage Officer has visited Eltisley and reported the collapsed drain, he was also writing to all the riparian owners regarding their riparian responsibilities.

Cllr S Ellis thanked SCDC Cllr Sandford and CCC Cllr M Smith for all of their support over the last year.

10. Report from the local Police.

None Received

11. To receive questions relating to reports from the following local organisations / bodies

None

12. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM.

A resident commented that he was disappointed in the lack of attendance and response from villagers for the APM where there is the opportunity for residents to raise any questions.

The resident commented on the broken drain and potholes along the side of the Green and continued to speak about the flooding at the exit of the village on the blind bend at Potton End. This area has flooded several times last winter and forces traffic onto the wrong side of the road.

Cllr S Ellis advised that the Drainage Officer has attended. The Parish Council will continue to monitor the situation. It has been exceptionally bad this winter however the land owners are failing in their riparian responsibility so the surface water drainage is not working as it should.

A discussion ensued querying whether the CCC had any enforcement powers with regards to riparian owner responsibilities and whether the issue could be escalated before an accident happens. CCC Cllr M Smith advised that CCC can continue to write to the riparian owners and suggested that the Parish Council could write to Hilary Tandy, Head of Department for Flooding. There is also a Flood Prevention Vehicle that could visit the village to give residents advice.

A resident advised that the bridle path at Caxton End has collapsed again and this has been reported.

Being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.38pm

Date

Chairman

APPENDIX A

Thank you all for attending my first APM as Parish Council Chairman. For those of you that have not met Alison before, Alison is our new parish clerk. Alison has worked alongside Jane Bowd helping us with all of our Parish matters and has now taken over the reins. I would like to welcome Alison, thank Jane for all her hard work in the past and the best for the future. I would also like to introduce our 2 new members since the last AGM Jackie Francis & Bill Bidgood. Thanks to Roger for his valued help in the handover.

We have had a number of major items that are and will be effecting our village, mainly the A428 and now the announcement of the East West Rail project that is planned for the other side of the New A428 bypass. We have had more than a few meetings with Highways England and Cambs County Council regarding the potential continuation of rat running and speeding through our village after the project has been completed. We have had progress in that Highways have slightly altered the junction at the new roundabout and Cambs County Council are looking at introducing speed reducing measures.

Due to the large amounts of, what seems like constant, rain we have experienced this year, it has become more apparent that our drainage system has become overwhelmed at certain times, this is a combination of lack of maintenance from the council and some residents not completing their obligations under their Riparian owners responsibilities. The county council has written to those residents and I hope this will be maintained during the summer months to stop the issues happening again.

The bus stop refurbishment was completed and finally opened, the delay being a problem with the electrics to the lighting.

Work has begun on the new affordable housing development on West Farm Close and they are progressing well with limited affect on the village. We hope that some of the existing residents can take advantage of the new houses, as they are prioritising existing contacts with the village before offering them to outsiders.

We have been busy planting several new trees which have been donated to us over the year, and have also commission a tree survey, the results of this will be published in due course.

We have been advised that there is a proposal to reinstate the Christmas Peace Tree lights, I'm sure everyone will be excited to see that tradition renewed.

Thanks to everyone that participates in the Speedwatch initiative, it really does make a difference to the speeds people travel through the village.

Finally a list of people that help maintain our community and make my life somewhat easier:

The 6 villages team, Richard Rogers for helping with our IT. Everyone that helps with the working parties. The parish council. Steve Ellis for writing the Chairman article. Mandy & Peter. Angie for many years on the Parish council which are sadly coming to an end.

APPENDIX B

FINANCIAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

Mrs Alison Jackson – the Clerk and RFO – presented the report based on year ending 31st March 2024.

Financial Report

Figures for 2022/23

Income £32814 of which Precept £23191

Expenditure £27400

£51304 retained at end of year

Internal audit carried to be carried out by CAPALC

Gibbs Denley long term investment value as at 9th August 2023 - £115,793.09

Draft figures for year ending 31st March 2024.

These have not yet been approved by council or audited.

Income £34104.63 of which Precept for 2023/24. £24163

Expenditure £30865.12

£54543.70 closing balance.

Internal audit carried to be carried out by CAPALC – 8th May 2024

6. Eltisley Village Green Trust report

Year ending 31/3/24

Opening balance 1/04/23 £4214.20

Receipts £5741.17

Payments £2911.54

Balance 31/3/24 £7043.83

Investments with M & G as at 31/3/24

Charibond 31058.600units @ 110.44 = £34301.12

Charifund 2186.515 units @ 1456.08 = £31837.41

Total £66138.53

Trustees:

Eltisley Parish Council

Alison Jackson (administrator)

Allotments:

31/03/24

Bal as at 1/4/23 £179.75

Receipts £165.00

Payments £277.37

Balance 31/3/24 £ 67.38

APPENDIX C

The Cade

Chairman's Report 2024

I'd like to start my first report as Chair, by apologising for being unable to attend the meeting and by thanking the committee and village for their support over the past year. We have endeavoured to maintain the building, but we do have some longstanding, outstanding repairs to make, such as to the outside render. We now have a building contractor engaged and hope to get on top of the remaining items this calendar year now that the weather has finally shown some improvement. We have continued to invest in the audio equipment having recently replaced the internal speakers and purchased better parasols to bring shade to the refreshed and extended patioed area. Following a change to fire regulations, which has resulted in The Cade capacity being reduced, we're looking at replacing the front doors as soon as possible to bring us back up to full capacity. We're hoping to cover some of the cost via a Community Chest application. The next significant piece of building work will be on the thatch. We believe a repair will be required in the next 18 months or so but securing a thatcher will be our biggest challenge as they are in scant supply.

Ongoing Management: Having spent 6 years as Secretary, I was voted in as Chair last year and Julie Herring thankfully took the Secretary role. Andy Howell has continued in the Treasurer role despite having wanted to step down for a couple of years now. Unfortunately, circumstances have been making this difficult. In the past year, Barclays closed our bank accounts without adequate notice or warning and Andy stepped up to the challenge of stabilising the situation, by moving us – within a week – to Metro Bank. Andy's conscientiousness and patience were the key qualities that got us back into an operational state. He also paid any bills and direct debits through his own personal accounts where necessary during this time and pursued Barclays for their tardy customer service and gained us an apology, an offer to reinstate our accounts and a monetary compensation. I'd like to call him out personally here and thank him for his efforts during this time. Although our money is secured by the FSA, we are still on the lookout for a final stable home for our accounts. We continue our hunt for a new Treasurer as Andy needs a break. We've also changed our main licensee, with Graham Sills having undertaken the training and gained the certification, following John Pettifor's resignation. Through this process, we have incorporated a review with our volunteers to reinforce the guidelines that we should all be working within. I'd also like to take the opportunity to thank John for his concerted efforts in delivering The Cade to the village in its current modernised and extended state. No mean feat for a building that has been operational for 89 years.

Sustainability: Lettings remain an important aspect of keeping The Cade sustainable and they remain buoyant. Adhoc bookings are more the standard now rather than having regular bookings as we did see pre pandemic. Considering our recent and planned capital outlays, our finances remain in good shape and the past years income versus outlay, evened themselves out.

Village Support and active Involvement: We have some strong and loyal supporters in the village, however we do feel as a committee it can be difficult to make an impression to widen The Cade's appeal within the village population. Feedback and ideas are always welcome. Our Sunday Lunches in the winter months are always well attended and again, our thanks go to those that provide such amazing dishes for such a low budget. We're looking to create some new 'anchor' events across the year to encourage our members to attend, such as our inaugural pool competition held in February of this year and resulted in some excited whoops across the evening! One such anchor could be around the Christmas lights switch on which we hope the Parish Council will allow us to realise, by accepting

our proposal to refresh and manage the Peace Tree lights this year. Our bar volunteers are a core component of what makes The Cade work. We'd like to thank them for their consistency and mostly for sparing their valuable time to service their thankful community with their enthusiasm. Again, we could always do with more volunteers to provide support and cover.

We look forward to another exciting year at The Cade.

Best regards, Sandra Sills, Chair of The Cade Management Committee

APPENDIX D

Newton Primary School Update

It has been a busy year in the life of Newton Primary School. The new school year had barely begun when we received the call from Ofsted to say they would be visiting us the next day for a full inspection, lasting two days. This was an incredibly busy (I don't think I slept for 48+ hours!) and stressful time, but thankfully the inspectors decided that we were a "good" school. This outcome is and will continue to be crucial for us as a school as it does help to make the school attractive for families deciding where to send their children and when numbers on roll are challenging – this is a real focus. It also helps us really concentrate on fully embedding all the changes that we have made across school, most notably in terms of our curriculum – without the distraction of trying to second guess when Ofsted will or won't turn up!

Our numbers on roll continue to fall (we have had a recent flurry of admissions – but at least two of these are Year 6 pupils who will leave again in July) and any admissions that we have had in recent months, are Cambourne over-spill ie. no places in Cambourne schools and are given a place here instead. Provided the children stay with us and don't disappear once a Cambourne place becomes available, this over-spill is less of an issue. We must continue to work hard to ensure that the school is known as widely as possible in the local area so that we attract families from both inside and outside the six villages in catchment.

Falling numbers do mean falling income in schools. Our budgets are incredibly tight to say the least and while we managed to end the last financial year in credit, this was down to savings accrued in previous years. As those savings have been used up, we have little or no cushion for the year ahead. Our mission is obviously to provide the best quality education that we possibly can, but with tight budgets, this mission is increasingly more challenging.

The Local Authority designated us as officially the smallest LA school in Cambridgeshire and as such, we are now on their "radar" so to speak. There has been a small schools strategy established and while I met with the then Director of Education for Cambridgeshire to discuss this, it seemed that beyond identifying us as a small school, there wasn't a great deal more to the strategy. Both James Singletery and I (as well as Julie Herring, our Chair of Governors) are working on ways to advertise the school (signs will soon be seen around the village) and make sure that people know it's here (the name doesn't provide any clues for people). Any other suggestions around this would be most welcome!

I started with our positive Ofsted and will end on some positives too, to counteract the gloom in the middle! Families responding in Ofsted questionnaires and those we have run ourselves as a school, have been overwhelmingly positive. Questionnaires we have completed with the children have also been very positive. Children feel safe, happy and proud of their school and families are very much giving us the same messages. Ofsted said that we were a school with a "family feel" and we will continue to ensure that this remains the essence of who we are. There is much to be achieved yet, but we have made great progress and will continue in that same vein.

Rachel Stephens