



Draft Minutes

**Meeting of the Parish Council
Monday 11th September 2017
7 pm at Elford Village Hall.**

Present: Councillors Jones (Chair), Collins, Gilbert, Payne, Turley and Wright.

In Attendance: Mrs Jones (Clerk), 18 members 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

Many residents had attended to discuss the current Staffordshire County Council consultation on the future of subsidies for the bus service. They expressed the concerns of those who used the 82 Solus service which was likely to close if a decision was made to cut the subsidies, leaving Elford with no bus links to neighbouring towns. If it had to close non-drivers would be unable to access essential services including doctors, dentists, hairdressers, shops and High Schools. This would have a big impact in the future on Elford which had no such services, and some people said they would have to move out of the village, while others said there would be a negative impact on their health and well-being. It was used by people of all ages, and served 6 villages. The Parish Council had obtained information about the proposals and would ask Solus for information on the numbers currently using the service. The Parish Council would respond to the consultation, giving details of the effects on Elford residents. A resident asked the Parish Council to contact the company who had run a local service previously to ask if they could step in if the 82-route closed, and another suggestion was made about a volunteer driver service. In the meantime, everyone was urged to respond to the survey before the deadline on 17th September. There would be a meeting at Harlaston Village Hall on Saturday 16th between 10.30 and 12.30 attended by Christopher Pincher MP and Alan White, County Councillor, residents could pass on their views on the impact of the proposals there, and ask for the 82 service to be retained, as it was so essential for people living in the area.

A resident who lived near the cricket ground asked about its frequent use for football; he commented that there were too many car movements in and out of the village by parents from outside the village who drove too fast for the narrow streets, cars were sometimes parked on Brickhouse Lane and drivers were not aware of its frequent use by residents. It was noisy for those living near the ground and bad language was used by parents watching the games, often very near to houses. Additionally, litter was not cleared up, and there were no toilets for the children. Residents wanted Elford to have sports

teams, but there were too many teams for the ground and village, and play now took place all year round including throughout the summer. The Parish Council as landowners should control the amount of matches, and agree dates and times, and then put information on the website to inform residents. The Chair said that the Parish Council intended to arrange a Sportsfield Committee meeting with the football and cricket clubs to discuss these points.

A resident referred to the Neighbourhood Plan and the extension to the conservation area, prepared by Lichfield District Council in 2014, which had not yet been adopted. The housing survey had showed that residents did not want building in the conservation area, yet a proposal had been made for building on open space near The Beck. This proposal would conflict with the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Collins advised attending the exhibition about the Plan the following evening when he could explain this in more detail.

A resident of the Elford Mill area complained that Highways had still not cleared the blocked drain on the A513 and water was coming down his drive again. The Clerk had reported this several times and would complain to Highways about their lack of action on the matter. He also commented that a neighbour was running a landscape business from his home, and using a garage extension for living accommodation, and asked for support if a planning application was made.

A representative of the Awoingt group explained proposals for a twinning association, an official agreement between the two villages. The first stages of links between Elford and Awoingt had already been achieved. An agreement between the two 2 councils was needed, with letters signed by the Chairs of the Councils during a mutual visit. This would be very beneficial for the community especially for the school. Cllr Turley offered to be the representative. The Parish Council agreed in principle; this would be officially confirmed by resolution at the next meeting.

1. To receive apologies for absence

None.

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

None received.

3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of 10/7/17

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

To receive information on matters arising from the meeting of 12th June.

Proposed Housing Development; an exhibition had been held but no application made yet. Best Kept Village; Elford had been awarded Highly Commended, the Judges' comments had been received.

Signage at Burton Road/The Shrubbery Junction; Highways had advised they would not change this.

Home Farm meeting; there were currently no plans to hold this.

Lawnmower; Cllr Gilbert suggested obtaining quotes for mowing The Avenue three times a year rather than maintaining and storing the Council's own mower.

Resolved: Approved

4. To appoint members to committees and local organisations

Members were appointed to the Sportsfield Committee; Cllrs Gilbert, Collins and Jones. Representatives; Elford Hall Gardens, Cllr Turley; Howard School, Cllr Payne; Village Hall, Cllr Collins; Social Club, Cllr Wright; Awoingt Group, Cllr Turley.

Resolved: Approved

5. To receive the Clerk's report

Vacancy – Cllr Smith had resigned and been thanked for his 3 years' service on the Council. A casual vacancy notice had been displayed and the District Council informed. The vacancy could be filled from mid-September by co-option, and had been advertised. Welcome signs – these had been delivered to the Council but the supplier could no longer install these, quotes would be obtained for installation by approved contractors. Dog bin – a representative of the Walled Garden had suggested moving the dog waste bin at the church near to the Walled Garden, and would be invited to the next meeting. Village Hall Annual Report – the information had been reported to the Charity Commission by the Parish Council as Custodian Trustee. Playground inspection – Lichfield District Council had been requested to carry out the annual inspection in September.

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

The Council had been notified of revised plans for Upfields Farm house. No further comments would be sent. Application 17/01148/FUL 51 The Beck; Single storey extension to rear to form utility / boot room and extend kitchen. No objection. The Neighbourhood Plan regulation 14 consultation had begun on 4th September.

Resolved: Approved

7. To consider maintenance

The clerk had prepared a list of work required for Gavin, including tidying the playground and painting the kiosk; Cllr Gilbert would liaise with him. A working party would need to be arranged soon to do various minor repairs. *Action: Cllr Gilbert*

Resolved: Approved

8. To consider outdoor fitness equipment

The Clerk would meet sales representatives shortly to receive information on what could be done with the available budget.

Resolved: Approved

9. To consider the Sportsfield

It was agreed to arrange a meeting of the Sportsfield Committee to discuss the issues raised earlier with both clubs. Legal advice had confirmed that the land held under Lease should be registered, and the Clerk would arrange for this to be done.

Resolved: Approved

10. To consider response to County Council bus consultation

As discussed earlier the Parish Council would respond to the survey to reflect the strength of feeling of local bus users. Cllr Jones would write to County Cllr Alan White. The Clerk would request information from Solus. *Action: Chair, Clerk*

Resolved: Approved

11. To consider issues relating to village events

It was agreed that the Scarecrow Festival had been a great success. A suggestion had been made that the Parish Council contribute to the purchase of traffic cones, and this could be considered when further details were provided. Cllr Wright felt that the Social Club could have played a role. The Chair said that it was important to involve all areas and organisations of the village; both matters could be discussed when members of the Scarecrow Committee were able to attend a future Council meeting.

Resolved: Approved

12. To consider use of Parish Council email addresses

Cllr Wright offered to set up new email addresses linked to the Parish Council website at no cost. These could be linked to personal addresses of Councillors for convenience. The existing addresses would be discontinued in due course and the account closed.

Action: Clerk, Cllr Wright

Resolved: Approved

13. To consider attendance at the Armistice Day Service

An invitation had been received to the Chair or a Councillor to attend this event on November 11th in Tamworth along with representatives of other Parish Councils. Cllr Wright offered to represent Elford. A wreath would be ordered.

Resolved: Approved

14. To receive questions and reports from Councillors

Cllr Gilbert said that twinning should be on the next agenda, he thanked Cllr Turley for volunteering to take part and suggested that the Parish Council contribute to expenses. He reminded members about a reader for the Christmas service at St Peter's Church.

15. To receive correspondence

Adcocks Solicitors - information on the Sportsfield Lease
District Council – electoral registration annual canvass, Council Tax Support Grant
Tamworth and District Civic Society – Armistice Day service
Community Council Best Kept Village Judges' Comments
British Legion – poppy wreaths
Community Council AGM
Resident regarding hedge cutting
Christopher Pincher MP, congratulating Elford for BKV Highly Commended status and the excellent Scarecrow festival

16. To receive a financial report.

- (a) Bank reconciliation - The PC funds were £16,525, plus playground funds of £10,212.
- (b) Precept – Lichfield District Council had explained a proposal to end the payment of the Council Tax Support Grant from 2018, which would increase the contribution requested from residents towards the Parish Council precept.
- (c) Signatories on Cooperative account – Cllr Smith would be removed and Cllrs Wright and Payne added.
- (d) Lloyds on - line banking – an application had been submitted for the Clerk to operate this but nothing further heard yet.
- (d) The External Audit had been completed with no comments by the Auditor and published according to regulations.

Resolved: Approved

17. To consider authorising the schedule of accounts for payment.

Payments to: M. Jones, salary and expenses; £357.84
Elford Village Hall, room hire and post office £110;
RW Harcombe, maintenance £125;
Prontaprint, Neighbourhood Plan printing £100.80
Google, email account £55

Resolved: Approved

18. Date of next meeting: Monday 9th October, 7 pm

The meeting closed at 9.30