

Elsenham Parish Council

Playing Field Committee Meeting

held at 5.30pm in Old Franks, High Street

on Wednesday 18 January 2023

MINUTES

Present: Mrs. S Waite (Chair SW), Mrs. B Donald (BD), Mrs. F Lambert (FL),
Dr. G Mott (GM) and Mrs. L Johnson (Parish Clerk LJ)

On behalf of Elsenham Football Club:

Mr. R Lambourne (Chairman RL) and Mr. R Ings (Vice Chairman RI)

Members of the public: Mr. P Jarvis (PJ)

1. Apologies for absence - None.

2. Declaration of Interests - None.

3. Approval of the minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2022 were agreed and signed by SW.
The minutes from 31 October 2022 were agreed and signed by SW.

4. Elsenham Youth Football Club (EYFC)

4.1. Maintenance on the field

The maintenance schedule had been agreed by RL.

Four tenders for the football pitch maintenance contract were sent to potential contractors, with a closing date of 9 February 2023.

The verti draining should be carried out two times per year, around April and September. The football pitches cover about 2/3 of the playing field. GM said that other parts of the field may benefit from verti draining, especially the top corner, nearest the car park, which gets very water-logged.

4.2. The future financial arrangements between EYFC and EPC

EYFC is a good amenity to have in the village. Approximately 15 years ago, an agreement had been made verbally that EPC would pay half towards the cost of the maintenance of the field with EYFC paying the other half. Until EPC receive the tenders back and know how much the work is going to cost, the contribution EYFC pay from 1 April 2023 cannot be calculated.

EYFC started in 2000 with just 50 children, they now have 450 members, 60% come from outside of the village.

The club attracts children from other villages because the club has a good reputation, and the fees are very low compared to other football clubs in the area.

There is a waiting list of about 20 children, with some living in Elsenham. There are 22 mixed teams, with nine different age groups and they play in three leagues.

The fees are £190 per year, for the over 6 – under 18's and £150 for under 6/5.

This fee is reduced throughout the season based upon when a member joins.

EYFC offer a payment plan to help families that find it difficult to pay one annual payment. There are also reductions if one of the parents joins the committee.

4.3. The new roll-out goals

RL said that EYFC would like to purchase roll-out goals. These goals are safer to use and are far easier to roll out on a Saturday/Sunday. They would like an area on the playing field to store the roll out goals. The goals would have a security fencing, like the tennis courts. It was agreed that the obvious location is the far left-hand corner as viewed from the car park (the site of the bonfire in former years).

The size of the secure area would need to be established before putting the proposal to EPC.

4.4. A legal agreement between EYFC and EPC

EYFC has been established since 2000, in that time there has only been an informal agreement between EPC and EYFC, which has always worked well. However, without a legal agreement it's impossible for EYFC to secure funding. With a legal agreement EYFC may be able to get a grant of £10,000 towards the maintenance of the pitches. A legal agreement should mean that funding could be secured from football authorities towards the cost of the new Community Hall.

Ideally, they would like the legal agreement to be for 20/25 years, stipulating that the club have rights to the playing field, to train and play football matches on certain days and times.

LJ said to set up a legal agreement EPC must get advice from their solicitors. The playing field is for all residents of Elsenham to use, and EPC must protect that.

PJ said he would get further advice from the Essex football association. LJ to put a proposal on the February's agenda to see how counsellors feel about proceeding with the legal agreement.

4.5. Who is to take over the new football pitches on the Bloor development, and on what terms?

There is to be one adult size football pitch and a football pavilion on the Bloor development site. In the Section 106 it states that the football pitch and pavilion will be ready to hand over before the 150th house is built. This could be anytime from now to approximately the end of 2025. The section 106 also states that the pitch and the pavilion will be offered to EPC with a maintenance fee of £59,650 for 25 years.

The funds are split into two, maintenance £20,000 and a sinking fund £40,000.

If EPC turn it down the ownership will pass to UDC.

One suggestion; as EPC is a more permanent entity than the football club, is for EPC to accept ownership and then lease it to the EYFC.

BD asked as the building would be a new build, would it be insured for 25 years?

This needs to be investigated.

RL said he thought this would be a great opportunity for EYFC.

A.O.B.

RL said that despite the no dog signs, dog mess was still being found on the playing field. EPC to remind residents on social media that dogs, except assistant and guide dogs, are not allowed in the playing field.

A scramble bike had been seen in the playing field. There are gaps in the knee-high fence where bikes could potentially get onto the field, by the gate near the bottom car park and between the Bowls Club and the Memorial Hall. EPC needs to investigate fencing these areas off.

PJ said he would like to see a gate installed at the top of the playing field for easier access from the Kingwood Place estate.

The meeting closed at 6.40pm