

Elsenham Parish Council

Playing Field Committee Meeting held at 7.00pm in Old Franks, Elsenham on Wednesday 30 August 2023

MINUTES

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

Members of the public: None.

1. Apologies for absence – Mr. P Jarvis (PJ).

2. Declaration of Interests – None.

3. Open to the public.

4. Approval of the minutes held on 2 August 2023.

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2023 were agreed and signed by SW.
JM said he thought the minutes should have contained more detail about hiring out the playing field and the fact that no cars are allowed on the playing field.

5. Items brought forward from previous meeting.

5.1. Teen Shelter – SW hopes to re-paint the teen shelter once the children have gone back to school.

5.2. Coffee Vendor – LJ had written to Alex Lambourne informing her that EPC are happy for Tart Au Citron to sell coffees, teas and cakes from the playing field on Saturdays and Sundays, in line with the football operating times. If any other days and times were required Alex must seek further approval from EPC.
Nicole McVickers has been given permission to serve coffee from a coffee van in the playing field car park on Friday afternoons.
EPC's litter picker should keep a check that neither vendor causes extra litter.

5.3. Gigaclear - EPC have still not received the contract waiver from Gigaclear asking permission to lay fibre optic cables along the Leigh Way path. This would allow the Memorial Hall to have WiFi. The work cannot commence until EPC has signed the waiver and the waiver must state *'all work will be put back to the standard it was before work commenced'*.

6. Budget.

Playing Field General Maintenance -£386
£1,650 for the Leigh Way light from EMR.
£1,322.61 basketball goal from EMR
Total -£386 + £2,972 = £2,586
Playground general Maintenance £1,807
Playground new equipment £1,000

Isabel Drive Playground general Maintenance £900

7. Elsenham Youth Football Club (EYFC)

For clarification there are two legal documents

7.1. The draft pro-forma agreement for the Elsenham Youth Football Club (EYFC).

The pro-forma agreement was signed at the Parish Council meeting on 15 May 2023. PJ has now sent the grant application off. If the application is successful EYFC should receive a grant of £49,146 rolling over a 6-year period. Year 1 and 2 would be the largest payments reducing in the following years. The grant is to pay for improving the football pitches.

The solicitors fee for checking this pro-forma was £240. EPC have asked the Football Club to pay the fee. A reply has not been received.

7.2. Legal Agreement with EYFC.

This legal agreement is yet to be drawn up by EPC's solicitors. The agreement is to give EYFC permission for a set number of years to play football on the Elsenham playing field. Once EYFC has this agreement it opens possibilities of grants for EYFC as well as a possible payment from Sports England of up to £100,000 over a 10-year period for the new community centre.

EPC's auditor stated that the agreement should be set up by EPC's solicitors and then given to the Football Club to sign, EPC must set the rules, with all legal fees being paid by the Football Club.

LJ had contacted Ricky Lambourn, Chair of EYFC, asking if EYFC would be prepared to pay the solicitors fees for drawing up the legal agreement, and if they would ask Sports England what the minimum number of years would be to satisfy their requirements. Ricky Lambourn replied confirming he would ask the Football Committee at the next meeting being held on 14 August. An answer has still not been received.

It was agreed to ask Ricky Lambourn to the next playing field meeting to discuss these issues.

8. Playing Field.

8.1. Reinstating the basketball stand.

EPC has been successful in their application to the Community Project Grant Scheme. UDC has approved a grant of £1,500, to go towards the new basketball goal. EPC have paid £1,822.61 towards the new basketball goal, with a further £455.65 to be paid on completion, which is due on 29 September.

The basketball goal will be sited at the far end of the overspill car park. There are no parking spaces marked out on this piece of land and the basketball stand will go on the no parking zone. This area will be marked 'No Parking' and hatching like that in front of the lower gate will be painted on. However, cars do park in front of the gate obstructing the emergency access to the field.

BD suggested EYFC could use the new community centre land as a car park, therefore leaving the emergency access accessible. EYFC would need to inform football clubs about the new parking arrangement.

8.2. Hiring out the playing field.

It was agreed that the village fete could be held on the playing field on 22 June 2024. The fete has a new committee for 2024. They have asked to set up on the evening before, 21 June. There is to be live music and the event will end about 10pm.

LJ to write to the Bowls Club and inform them of the date of the fete.

8.3. Boundary Fence.

The knee-high wooden fence around the boundary of the playing field needs treating, it has not been treated in four years.

As this has not been budgeted for this year it was agreed to wait until next year.

SW said she would like to make a 5-year plan. Listing items that need to be carried out, how much they would cost and the time scale.

In 2024/25 the committee would like to budget for.

Treating the knee-high fence - £460.

Purchasing an extra CCTV camera - £380.

JM said large expenditure, such as re-surfacing the road from the Leigh Way gate to the lower car park, should be accumulated over a few years, putting a sum of money each year to EMR.

8.4. The use of Glyphosate Free weed killer.

It was agreed that the grasscutter could use a glyphosate free weed killer on the paths in the playing fields but not on the grass growing between the fence posts on the playing field.

9. Isabel Drive Play area.

EPC had received tenders from Kompan, Timotay and Dania. GM, FL and LJ met a representative of Proludic on 29 August, who are going to try and send their tender in by 5th September. The tenders are to be circulated to all members and a meeting to discuss them is to be held on Monday 25 September either at 2pm or 7pm.

10. Any Other Business.

LJ had contacted NALC about dogs on the playing field and what EPC can do now that the Bye Laws that were made in 1989 are no longer enforceable.

NALC advice was the Parish Council should let the residents know that the byelaw is no longer enforceable. The Parish Council could pass a resolution to say no dogs are allowed on the playing field or dogs must be kept on leads and install their own "No Dogs" signs. However, this would still not be enforceable. The Parish Council can make its own byelaw; however, the main problem of enforcement would still remain.

The meeting finished at 8.50pm.

The next meeting is to be held on 25 September 2023.