

Elsenham Parish Council

Playing Field Committee Meeting held at 7.00pm in Old Frank's, Elsenham on Wednesday 22 May 2024

MINUTES

Present:

Mrs. S Waite (Chair, SW), Mrs. B Donald (BD), Mrs. F Lambert (FL), Mr. J Minor (JM),
Dr. G Mott (GM)

Members of the public: 2

In the absence of the Parish Clerk, the minutes were taken by GM

1. Election of Chair.

JM proposed SW as Chair, FL seconded, the vote was carried unanimously.
SW is elected chair of the Playing Field Committee for the coming year.

2. Apologies for absence.

Mrs. L Johnson (Parish Clerk, LJ)

Apologies for lateness.

Mr. P Jarvis (PJ)

3. Declaration of Interests.

None

4. Open to the public.

The householder of 1 Crossways addressed the meeting, in reply to the letter sent by the PC regarding the proposal to site an outdoor gym and table tennis table on the land adjacent to the back fence of her property. She is in favour of the proposal in principle. However, such facilities elsewhere are usually fairly isolated. Here they would be literally within yards of their back door, since the garden is small - councillors were invited round to see for themselves. It would be helpful to know exactly where the items would be sited. Preferable locations would be around the corner of the bowling green, or near to the teen shelter. The amenities would inevitably attract young people in the evening and into the night, and it was impossible they could be policed. She stressed that she likes the sound of the children's play area and the Memorial Hall is not an issue; the tennis courts are noisy. The ladies' gym can be heard when it takes place, but that does not happen all the time.

The householder at 2 Crossways also responded to the PC's letter. She referred to existing noise - from the tennis courts and shed, from children in the play area, from motor bikes at 11.30pm and later. Tennis balls have hit her windows; she is aware of these disturbances, since she works from home.

JM gave some background to the proposal. It came forward some four years ago, when a supplier was identified, but funding was not available. The area was considered suitable, since users of the tennis courts would see what was happening and the area could be monitored by a TV camera. Parents could use the equipment while their children were in the play area. Noise could not be helped. We are consulting now with the best of intentions. No-one knows what the impact will be.

The householder at 2 Crossways asked why?; what studies have you done?

JM replied that we had a response four years ago, and the householder asked for the data to be provided.

SW said that the Committee is looking to provide facilities for younger teenagers.

PJ joined the meeting.

The householder at 2 Crossways said that she is prepared to engage solicitors, and asked to be advised when the PC has obtained funding.

BD said that the Committee is scoping out the project and that the householders' voices were heard.

GM said that members are familiar with the size of the householders' gardens, from familiarity with the previous single-dwelling occupation of the land.

SW mentioned picnic tables.

The householder at 1 Crossways said that teenagers don't use rubbish bins, and asked to be kept up to date.

BD said that all the information, including the minutes of meetings, would be published on the PC's website.

The householders thanked the Committee for listening, and left the meeting.

5. Approval of the minutes held on 24 April 2024.

The minutes were signed by SW as a true and accurate record.

6. Items brought forward from the meeting on 24 April 2024

6.1. Weeds in Children's play area and open space on Isabel Drive.

It was pointed out that expenditure on the Isabel Drive areas comes from S106 money.

Options were discussed: hand weeding; weed killer; resurfacing.

BD said that EAGLES might be prepared to take over the open area on the left of Isabel Drive (adjacent to the new entrance road to the Dandara development).

Action: BD

It was agreed that, if proposed, such an arrangement would need to go before the PC.

It was agreed that the path through the Isabel Drive play area should be resurfaced and that quotations should be sought.

Action: LJ

6.2. Grass growing through the new paths in the children's play area. See item 7

6.3. Is Dania guarantee an insurance backed-guarantee?

Outstanding. Dania should be asked again.

Action: LJ

6.4. Meeting to be arranged with EYFC, suggested by email on 5 March.

In hand: PC will be represented by GM (Community Centre), Bob Burlton (Finance), SW (Playing Field). All cllrs will be notified of the meeting.

7. Playing Field and Play Area

Response from Dania - 13 May, regarding grass growing through new paths.

The offer of weed-killer should be accepted. A date needs to be agreed, avoiding half-term, bank holidays and Fridays, subject to the weather. Signs should be provided in advance, to advise that the play area will be closed for 24 hours. **Action: LJ**

Paths in the children's play area, how and when to proceed.

Still waiting two further quotes. Honours have not responded, nor two others.

LJ to chase. **Action: LJ**

Playbark quote – 8 May.

GM expressed concern that Playbark had apparently told LJ that a site visit is not needed. He quoted from the tender document: 'All dimensions are approximate and the plan is not to scale. The area should be inspected.' He also questioned whether timber edging is necessary.

8. Outdoor Gym.

4 responses from residents.

The suggestion from a householder at 1 Crossways, that the area adjacent to the teen shelter would be suitable was discussed. PJ said it is not suitable, since it is too close to the football pitches. GM said that it looked OK to him, and questioned whether all the pitches are marked out. PJ said that a suitable location would be the square area between the Memorial Hall and the Bowls Club. However, it is believed that the ECA land extends further than the Memorial Hall. **Action: SW to check with Allan Hathaway**
It was agreed that the area would need a camera and motion-sensitive lights.

GM raised the question of surfacing. It had been explained previously that the outdoor gym equipment comes with its own surfacing. However, that would not apply to a table-tennis table. A grass surface would very quickly become worn. The outdoor gym and table-tennis table should be regarded as two separate projects.

It was agreed that JM should move ahead with seeking funding for the outdoor gym.

Action: JM

9. Isabel Drive play area.

Moving the litter bin.

Outstanding. LJ to chase Mick Burke, again. **Action: LJ**

10. AOB.

GM mentioned the recent occasion when a dog was reported in the children's play area.

He said that a 'No Dogs' notice is to be found a short distance from the entrance to the play area. SW undertook to inspect, with a view to asking Mick Burke to move the notice so that it is on the entrance gate to the play area. **Action: SW**

BD referred to the bollard adjacent to the roadway, which has been hit and painted. She said that it looks terrible, and needs to be professionally painted.

11. To agree the date of the next meeting

The last Wednesday in June, 26 June.

The meeting finished at 8.25 pm.