

Minutes of Meeting on 6th January 2025
Elmstead Parish Council – Finance Committee
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Present: Councillors Martine Ward (Chairman), Adam Gladwin, Amanda Brennan, Michael Hare.
Mrs Baxter (clerk)

Absent: Councillors James Chable

- 25/001 Apologies of Absence**
Apologies were received from Cllr James Chable.
- 25/002 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests**
None.
- 25/003 To agree the Minutes of the meeting of 19th July 2024.**
It was resolved to accept the minutes from 19th July 2024 as true and accurate.
Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Hare, all in favour.
- 25/004 2024/24 Third Quarter Review**
To review the expenditure for the third quarter of 2024/25 against the set budget. Also, to consider the reserves.
The committee went through the cost centres. The office expenses are over budget as we did not budget for Scribe Accounts. It was asked if the EALC subscription is worth it. We need it for the NALC templates and advice for the council.
Under general maintenance there will be another mower service to add.
There is a budget for the speedgun calibration, but Speedwatch is not operating at the moment. It could be used for improvements to traffic signs.
It was concluded that we are doing well against the budget at the 3rd quarter. The total spend less spend from earmarked reserves is at 74% of the budgeted expenditure.
The clerk warned the committee that the general reserve is low.
- 25/005 2025/26 Budget and Precept**
To discuss and advise a budget for 2025/26 to recommend to the full council. To discuss the 2025/26 precept request to recommend to the full council.
The clerk is to ask our Dene Park grass cutting contractor if he can stand in for our handyman for grass cutting when he is away.
The clerk is to check how much of contracted employee sickness is covered by the reserve.
The PC insurance budget was increased to £1,200 due to coming out of a 3 year long term arrangement with Zurich in May June 2025. .
Councillor training was decreased to £500. Grants were reduced to £2,700, based upon the applications for 24/25. The events budget for Halloween was reduced to £50 and Christmas to £200. This is due to stallholder fees offsetting some expenses. A maintenance budget of £200 was added for the allotments still to be transferred.
Code 36 other recreational and open space can be used towards the path between Elmcroft car park and the allotments. Code 43 other highways can be used for road sign improvements. Code 48 public communications can be used for a newsletter. It was discussed that we can also offer sponsorship or advertising in a newsletter.
We are to start saving into a reserve in 2026/27 for the next Neighborhood Plan.
It was resolved to recommend a budget of £82,810.08 to council. With budgeted income this gives a net budget of £75,532.08. This would result in an 11% increase to council tax. However as the general reserve needs building up the committee resolved to recommend a precept of £78,250 which gives a 15% increase in council tax and adds

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£2,718 to the general reserve. This is an extra £10.50 per year over 24/25.

- 25/006** Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.
 Date for next meeting.
 The next meeting will be to review the fourth quarter 24/25 expenditure, so will be after
 the end of March 2025.
- 25/007** **Matters raised by Councillors for the next agenda or for information only.**
 None.
- 25/008** **Verification of Bank Reconciliations**
 A member to verify the 3rd Quarter 24/25 bank reconciliations.
 Cllr Brennan will do this.

The meeting closed at 2.06pm. Minuted by Mrs. A Baxter
Contact: elmsteadparish@gmail.com