

Minutes of On-line Meeting on 8th December 2020
Elmstead Parish Council – Finance Committee
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Present: Councillors Nick Bell, John Gray and Martine Ward
Mrs Baxter (clerk)
Meeting commenced at 7.00pm

- 20/013 To elect a Chairman**
It was resolved for Cllr Gray to chair this meeting and to appoint a Chairman at a future meeting.
- 20/014 Apologies of Absence**
None
- 20/015 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Non Pecuniary Interests**
None
- 20/016 To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting of 8th January 2020.**
It was resolved to accept the Minutes of the meeting of 8th January 2020 as true and accurate.
Proposed: Cllr Bell, Seconded: Cllr Ward, all in favour.
- 20/017 2020/21 Second Quarter Review**
To review the expenditure for the second quarter of 2020/21 against the set budget. Also to consider the reserves.
The committee reviewed the second quarter expenditure and checked the reasons for expenditure over 50% for the first two quarters.
It was asked whether EPFA (Essex Playing Fields Association) could assist with the new football field. The clerk is to send the contact details to Cllr Gray.
It was resolved to send a thank you to Mr and Mrs Brock for undertaking the responsibility for the flag on the North Green. This is to be flowers and wine and will come from the chairman's allowance.
Proposed: Cllr Bell, Seconded: Cllr Gray, all in favour.
It was noted that the first and second quarter expenditure is within budget at 44%.
- 20/018 2021/22 Budget and Precept**
To discuss and agree a budget for 2021/22 to recommend to the full council 17th December meeting. To discuss the 2021/22 precept request to recommend to the full council 17th December meeting.
The committee discussed the draft budget and made changes as follows:
The staff wages were changed as recommended by the personnel committee.
The councillor training budget was kept at the 20/21 figure of £800 in anticipation of new councillors.
The handyman training budget was reduced to £0 as there is now a £400 reserve for this. It was suggested that if he needs to do chainsaw training this is done at Colchester Institute.
The community centre maintenance budget was reduced to £0 as there is a reserve of £3,000 for community centre repairs and upkeep.
Publicity was increased to £500 because of the costs that will be associated with the Neighbourhood Plan.
After making changes to the draft budget the committee resolved to approve and recommend a budget of £40,662 to full council.
Proposed: Cllr Ward, Seconded: Cllr Bell, all in favour.
The committee looked at different scenarios of how much of the budget to request as a precept. A full budget request would result in an 8.59% increase in council tax. A £38,950

Signature

Date

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precept would give a 4.01% council tax increase. A £38,600 precept would give a 3.08% increase and a £38,200 precept would give an increase of 2.01%.

It was resolved to recommend a precept request of £38,600 and to fund the remaining £2,062 budget from unallocated general reserves. This gives a council tax increase of 3.08%.

Proposed: Cllr Ward, Seconded: Cllr Gray, all in favour.

It was discussed that the 21/22 tax base has decreased from 20/21, which is part of the reason for the 3% increase in council tax. We were told by TDC that this is due to a decrease in council tax collection and an increase in people on benefits. Cllr Gray asked whether TDC claims from the government for this, the clerk is to check with TDC.

It was also asked whether our insurance would cover the use of the playing field for a football team hire. The clerk is to check, and Cllr Gray will check if the team has its own insurance.

20/019 Date for next meeting

The next meeting will be to review the third quarter expenditure.

It was decided to hold the next meeting on the second Thursday of February during the day.

20/020 Exclusion of press and public

To resolve that pursuant to S.1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the meeting be closed to the public and press for the following items of business.

This was unnecessary as no members of public were present.

20/021 Staff salaries

To consider the recommendation of the Personnel Committee following on from the staff appraisals with respect to the clerk's and handyman's salaries for the year 2021/22. To agree to make a recommendation to full council.

It was resolved to agree with the personnel committee's recommendation in making a recommendation to full council.

It was also resolved to approve a £50 bonus for the clerk and handyman.

Proposed: Cllr Ward, Seconded: Cllr Gray, all in favour.

20/022 Matters raised by Councillors for the next agenda or for information only.

None

20/023 Verification of Bank Reconciliations

A member, other than the Chairman, to verify the 2nd Quarter bank reconciliations. To discuss how to do this.

Cllr Ward will do this. The clerk is to speak to Cllr Ward about how to do this.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm. Minuted by Mrs. A Baxter

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Signature

Date