

Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting on 18th May 2023
Elmstead Parish Council
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Present: Cllrs Adam Gladwin, (Chairman), Amanda Brennan, James Chable, Maxine Jeggo, Michael Hare and Martine Ward.

Also Present: 1 member of the public.

District Councillors Gary Scott and Ann Wiggins.

Mrs Baxter – clerk.

Absent: Cllrs Sarah Donaldson and Gill Williams.

23/001 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Sarah Donaldson and Gill Williams sent their apologies. We also received apologies from County Councillor Guglielmi.

23/002 Approval and signing of the minutes from 19th May 2022.

It was resolved to accept the minutes from 19th May 2022 as true and accurate.

Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

23/003 Chairman's Annual Report

Cllr Gladwin thanked the previous chairman, Cllr Brennan, for her support and for remaining as vice-chair. He also thanked everyone else for their contributions over the past year. Looking at previous chairman's reports the council is very different to how it was previously, pre-covid. The village has nearly doubled in size over the last decade which has brought challenges. It's great to have new councillors and their fresh perspectives. It also means that we can decide on adopting the General Power of Competence which opens up opportunities.

With the Neighbourhood Plan complete and awaiting consultation we hope that any future growth will be done in a sustainable and beneficial manner for the Parish. We will need to ask the community to vote in a referendum for the Neighbourhood Plan. Once ratified we will have a community led planning strategy in place.

We remain focused on the Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community project. We are working to seek the best possible outcome for the residents. Public consultation has already started with events on tomorrow. We are awaiting news on the future of the A120/A133 link road.

Progress has been made on the crossing for the A133 at the western end of the village. The Parish Council is doing everything it can to facilitate this.

The New Community Centre faces its own challenges, with having to wait for funding from developers it seems unlikely that the deadline for the current planning permission will be met. This would provide an opportunity for revisiting and revising the plans.

It's been a year of highs and lows, with the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations at the start of June, but then the sad news of the Queen's passing. More recently we've had the King's Coronation and events, everyone who planned and ran that event, along with Halloween and Christmas has done a wonderful job.

Cllr Gladwin congratulated our recently re-elected District Councillors Ann and Gary, and thanked them for all they do.

Thanks to our village handyman Alan, who does a vast array of jobs around the village. Alan now has a Pride of Tendring Award which is very much deserved.

We hope Cllr Guglielmi is back to full health soon and we look forward to working together as always.

Cllr Gladwin thanked the clerk for everything she does.

Cllr Brennan added thanks to Cllr Gladwin for all the work he has done for the council.

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23/004 Finance Committee – Annual Report
See report below.

23/005 Public Question Time – *Please submit your questions in writing to the council by 15th May. By e-mail to elmsteadparish@gmail.com or to the Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead, CO7 7ET.*
No questions were submitted.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.
Minutes written by Mrs. A Baxter
Contact: 07907 610381

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The Finance Committee is a Committee of EPC, meeting quarterly or as required. It has delegated powers for some decisions and makes recommendations to full council for discussion and final ratification on others. Every year it drafts the budget and calculates the annual precept required, then reviews expenditure on a quarterly basis. It also discusses and makes recommendations on awarding grants to local organisations and charitable causes.

Overview

In the 2022/23 fiscal year EPC had a total income of £148,357.52. This was made up of a precept of £40,850, a LCTSS grant of £604, together with grants for the Neighbourhood Plan and Neighbourhood Development Order of £53,700, playing field hire of £900, section 106 funding from Go Homes of £50,000, donations of £2,100 and interest of £203.52.

Our total expenditure for the year amounted to £92,958.85 net of VAT (which is recoverable). Most of our expenditure was close to or below the budget set at the beginning of the year, apart from:

- Office costs as we paid for an archiving service which was not budgeted for. (£390).
- Rent and hire due to the costs of hiring the hall for the warm hub and the council surgery. We received a grant from Beth Chatto Gardens in March 23 which should cover hall hire costs until the end of the year and beyond. The costs for hire of the playing field increased.
- Streetlighting costs increased by 60% on the previous year.
- The number of events increased and so the expenditure exceeded the budget by £1,800, although we received a £500 grant towards that. Additional events included Halloween, the Christmas tree festival, Christmas and the warm hub.

The total expenditure was £36,608 higher than budgeted. This is mainly for the following reasons:

- £28,355 was spent on the Neighbourhood Development Plan which was funded by a Groundworks grant.
- £10,620 was spent on the Neighbourhood Plan of which £6,731 was funded by a Groundworks grant.
- Other budget headings were underspent offsetting some of the above.

How the income was used.

- Staff and administration costs e.g., clerk & handyman's wages, expenses, phone/broadband, insurance, office supplies, and membership fees.
- Maintenance costs e.g., grass cutting around the village & Dene Park, mower servicing, Christmas tree & lights, waste collection (community centre & dog bins), and general day to day maintenance around village.
- Rent & Hire i.e., hire of community centre for meetings, surgeries and the warm hub and playing field rental.
- Highways & Street Lights costs i.e., electricity and maintenance for village streetlights and also recalibration of "speed watch" camera.
- Increasing reserves to fund future projects. This includes the replacement of the mower, potential future legal costs, costs associated with the new community centre and renewals of office equipment.
- Capital expenditure - a new strimmer, 3 plaques and a meeting recorder.
- Professional fees – for internal and external audit.

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- Grants for local not for profit organisations – Coffee and Cake, The Carpet Bowls Club, Elmstead Nursery, Upmarket, upkeep of the churchyard, The Marketeers and the knitting club.
- Neighbourhood Plan.
- Events; Remembrance Sunday, the Queen's Jubilee, Halloween, Christmas, the warm hub.