

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 19th May 2016
Elmstead Parish Council, held at
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Present: Councillors N Bell (Chairman), P Beard, S Beecham, R Fairweather, M Kirby, R Redding, J Routledge and M Ward

Also Present: District Councillor Fred Nicholls, District Councillor Rosemary Heaney, Mrs Baxter (Clerk), and 5 members of the public

16/001 Chairman's Annual Report

Cllr Bell read his annual report, see attached.

16/002 Chair of Finance Committee – Annual Report

Cllr Redding went through the Finance Committee Report, see attached. There were no questions.

16/003 Village Plan – Report of progress this year.

Cllr Beard gave an overview of the village plan, see attached. Cllr Beard asked that the plan be a working document to be included in every PC meeting. It will ultimately become a complete village plan which will be produced after consultation with the residents.

16/004 Public Question Time

There were no questions.

The meeting was closed at 19.25 and the attendees were invited to join the councillors for refreshments before the Annual Parish Council Meeting started.

Minuted by Mrs. A Baxter

19th May 2016

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Elmstead Parish Council - Chairman's Report – 2015/16 Annual Parish Council Meeting 19th May 2016

Needless to say it has been a very busy year for the parish council and especially for Angela. Future planning applications for the village have been a major contribution. Due to the Local Tending plan not being released for 2016/ 2031 as yet, we have had various plans submitted, with locations dotted around the village. We have found that even if we object to an application and Tending planning refuse it, if it goes to appeal then the planning inspector approves it. The percentage pending and granted is approximately 15/16% which does include Meadow Close for 20 houses and Church Road for another 20 houses. At present the total of new housing in process is approx. 170 including the 32 applied for in Tye Road which is still to be decided by TDC. See appendix A.

Other considerations with the planning have been under review and discussion, trying to reflect on improvements on some services within the village. Overall Elmstead has taken a big hit from the kind of Planning Applications that in normal times would be refused.

Another very critical subject is the field next to Market Field School, as everybody knows our lease runs out in March 2017. We have establish with the Village how important the field is to the Community, for various functions and sports. It is also important to the dog walkers. However the parish council has come under fire from the School Headmaster, who is (rightly so) giving us a hammering about dog fouling, and passing this information to ECC. The council has taken this problem very seriously, in the last three weeks we have had poo watch days, spoken to dog walkers, new signs have gone up, and collection bags will be available. Please ensure you clear up after your dogs and use the dog bins at each in of the field.

We cannot defend any transgression of this ruling. We must have zero tolerance. The grass is cut every 2- weeks, which does help to locate and dispose of the faeces.

We ask for your co-operation on this topic, to ensure the Headmaster and ECC cannot use this as an excuse to refuse renewal of the village lease, or be left with a fenced section, which is totally unacceptable to everybody.

The Speed Watch team continues to have a presence in the village operating in places designated by the police on the main road. We would welcome anybody to join Stan's Team, to try and increase our profile through the summer months. Thanks are due to Stan for keeping the watch going.

Also thanks to our Handyman and Grass cutter Alan, who manages the greens and other areas to keep the village looking very smart. He does however have a difficult task, in trying to pick up the general rubbish dropped on our paths and roads, Why do people have to do this!!, it is annoying, and costs we the tax payer.

Can the Council request a greater effort to all our parishioners to help with the pickup this year? I would also extend a big thank you to all the councillors for their efforts this year. We may be 3 short, but the enthusiasm shown at all meetings is excellent.

Appendix A – Elmstead Planning

20 houses Meadow Close – outline planning agreed by TDC and sec 106 agreement finalised.

20 houses Church Road – outline planning agreed by TDC, sec 106 agreement still to be finalised.

32 houses Clacton Road – outline planning refused by TDC but allowed on appeal.

50 houses Charity Field, School Road – outline planning refused by TDC. Not known if the developer will appeal.

32 houses Tye Road – application has been made, PC have objected and asked that the application be called in before the planning committee.

3 houses Blue Barn Farm, Clacton Road – outline planning refused by TDC but allowed on appeal. Subsequently applied for 7 houses, PC have objected and TDC has refused permission. Not known if the developer will appeal.

6 houses adjacent to Clacton Road Car Park - PC objected, TDC asked the developer to make some changes to the application and the developer has lodged a non determination appeal.

4 houses Broad Lanes – PC supported the application by TDC refused. The developer has indicated he will appeal and submitted another (outline) planning application in the meantime.

Total houses 167-171.

Total already approved/allowed 75

Elmstead Parish Council - Finance Committee Report 2015-16

The Finance Committee operates with delegated authority from Elmstead Parish Council (EPC). Typical matters which will be discussed and agreed at the committee meetings include review of expenditure and budget setting, calculation of the annual precept request (this is the income which is funded through the EPC element of your Council tax), awarding of grants to local organisations or charitable causes, purchases and other financial decisions.

The finance committee makes recommendations to full council based on its decisions and full council will either accept the recommendations made or may discuss and debate further which can in turn lead to some revised outcomes.

In the 2015-16 financial year (1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016), Elmstead Parish Council had a Total Income of £42,840.01. This was primarily made up of the combined TDC precept & LTCSS (Localisation of Council Tax Support Scheme) grant of £29,988.00 with other sources of funds accounting for £12,852.01. The key component of the other funding was a one-off £10,000.00 donation from Bluegates solar park to be used for community projects. This is mentioned further in the 2015-16 highlights section.

EPC's finances for the 2015-16 financial year can be summarised as follows :-

Balance B/F (01/04/2015)	£ 38,622.79
Total Income	£ 42,840.01
Less Total Expenses*	<u>£ 28,758.46</u>
Balance (31/03/2016)	£ 52,704.34

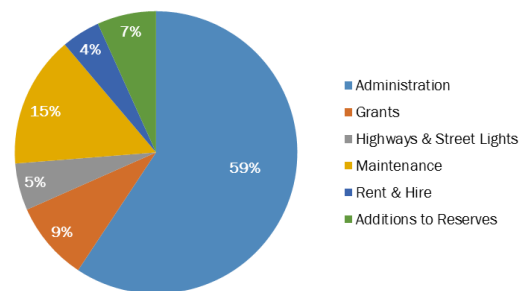
** includes VAT but excludes increases in reserves*

Summary of Net Expenditure vs Budget

Expense Type	2014-15	2015-16	2015-16	Variance
	Actual £	Budget £	Actual £	
Administration	19,035.54	18,040.00	17,560.31	479.69
Grants	2,260.00	2,500.00	2,681.50	(181.50)
Highways & Street Lights	2,434.29	1,900.00	1,593.78	306.22
Maintenance	3,222.48	4,220.00	4,463.89	(243.89)
Rent & Hire	1,309.23	1,300.00	1,311.00	(11.00)
Additions to Reserves	1,500.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
Total Net Expenditure *	29,761.54	29,960.00	29,610.48	349.52

** Excludes VAT which is reclaimable*

2015-16 Breakdown of Expenditure



How was the EPC Income used?

Administration costs – includes clerk & handyman wages, subscriptions, professional fees, costs of running the EPC office and general expenses.

Grants – grants awarded to local organisations under S137 and any other grants awarded.

Highways & Street Lights – Maintenance of EPC-owned street lights and electricity consumed, maintenance of footpaths and costs associated with Community Speedwatch activities.

Maintenance – grass cutting around the Village and Dene Park, servicing and maintenance of mower, waste collection from community centre and village dog bins, Christmas tree and lights.

Rent and Hire – costs of hiring community centre for EPC meetings and events, costs of leasing Market Field.

Additions to Reserves – This is typically a means of building a provision towards future Capital Expenditure, eg fitting out the new community centre, replacing the mower when it reaches the end of its useful life.

2015/16 Grants Awarded

Each year EPC makes a contribution to local groups and organisations under various specific legislative powers including Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972. Groups are invited to request a grant which would benefit their organisation and advise what they would like to use it for. The finance committee discuss and recommend to full council the grant to be awarded. 2015-16 grants awarded totalled £2,681.50 as follows:-

P Hinchcliffe (War Memorial plants)	£85.00	The Marketeers	£200.00
Royal British Legion	£68.00	St Anne & St Laurence Church	£200.00
Essex Air Ambulance	£100.00	Elmstead Market Art Group	£200.00
Elmstead Baby & Toddler	£200.00	Elmstead Market Bowls Club	£200.00
Elmstead in Bloom	£200.00	Upmarket Magazine	£200.00
Elmstead Gardening Club	£200.00	Young at Heart	£200.00
Elmstead Knitting Group	£78.50	Trinity Methodist Church	£100.00
1st Alresford & 1st Elmstead Scouts	£250.00	Elmstead Cricket Club	£200.00

2015-16 Highlights

In overall terms the annual expenditure including reserves was 1.1% below the agreed budget.

Looking at each main expense type, there were a small number of adverse variances to budget which are explained below.

- Wages were 3% higher than the allocated budget, this was largely due to additional handyman hours incurred grass cutting for Elmstead Primary School which were recovered as income. Net of these costs the total expenditure for the year was 2% below budget.
- There was a small excess on budgeted insurance costs of £19.14 or 2% due to marginally increased premiums.
- Subscriptions were £35.83 or 7% above budget due to a standing order for CPRE membership (Council for Protection of Rural England) which was not included in the budget.
- The Recreational/Open Space expense line was 65% above budget at £1,944.24, however this was entirely driven by £1,608.80 expenditure on new Elmstead in Bloom (EIB) planters for which EPC received a reciprocal contribution from EIB in the 2015/15 financial year.
- Grants awarded were 7% above the allocated budget but well within the allowable amount under the S137 formula.

During the year the Bluegates working party consulted with the village on various schemes and options to utilise the £10,000 donation received from the Bluegates solar park. As the year closed EPC was pursuing the option to install village gates and appropriate signage at each of the four entrances to the village with the use of any remaining monies to be progressed in 2016/17. We also have access to s106 contributions of £2,330.80.

During 2014/15 EPC full council also resolved to progress a programme of LED streetlight replacement for the parish council owned lights in the village. Over time this will deliver considerable cost benefits. Prior to initiating the programme EPC is taking advice to ensure there are no adverse effects on the local bat population.

The aim of the EPC finance committee was to spend responsibly and seek cost efficiencies where possible. A number of contracts were re-negotiated or suppliers changed during the year and the management of overall costs relative to budget indicate our aims were substantively met.