

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 16th January 2014

Present: Cllrs: Bell (Chairman), Redding, Beecham, Fairweather, Routledge and Grotier

Also present: District Councillors Heaney and Nicholls, PCSO Barnes and 4 members of the public

14/001. Apologies of Absence

There were apologies from Cllr Lloyd and Cllr Brock and Cllr Gray due to his resignation.

14/002. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Non Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of pecuniary or non pecuniary interests.

The Chairman took the opportunity at this point in the meeting to thank and congratulate Cllr Beecham on behalf of the Parish council and the villagers of Elmstead for the splendid new notice boards on North Green and harvest way. The Chairman went on to say that they certainly enhance the area and do justice to Cllr Beecham's skill and commitment.

14/003. Signing of the minutes from 19th December 2013

It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes from the 19th December 2013.

Proposed: Cllr Beecham

Seconded: Cllr fairweather

14/004. Police Report

PCSO Les Barnes spoke about the increased crime in this area and went through the figures. (see appendix 1)

14/005. UpMarket

Barbara Faulkner attended the meeting to talk about Upmarket.

The magazine has been going for 27 years. It is in financial trouble. Advertising pays for the magazine. Advertisers pay for advertisements in advance and this money would have to be paid back to them if the magazine has to fold. It currently costs £330 a month to run.

Upmarket has applied for a parish council grant.

14/006. Time Capsule

The time capsule plaque will be situated in Elmstead Primary school grounds.

It was **Resolved** to go with the quote for £174.

Proposed: Cllr Routledge

Seconded: Cllr Beecham

14/007. Local Plan

The Parish Councillors discussed the Changes to the Local Plan. There was a representative for Mr Gittens present, who answered questions about the Charity Field.

It was **Resolved** to respond to the Local Plan and object to the entrance in Meadow Close.

Proposed: Cllr Beecham

Seconded: Cllr Fairweather

14/008. Finance – To agree invoices to be paid and to be updated on the current balances
See appendix 2

14/009. Updates and announcements
Cllr Fairweather gave an update on the mower.

14/010. Planning
There were no planning applications

14/011. Reports by District Councillors- To listen to reports by Cllr. Heaney and Cllr. Nicholls
See appendix 3

14/012. Report from County Councillor Guglielmi
See appendix 4

14/013. Matters Raised by Councillors for the next agenda or for information only

Signed.....Clerk to the Council – Vikki Howard
All relevant correspondence has been circulated to Councillors and is available to the public upon request.

Appendix 1 – Police Report

Police Report December 2013

- Nuisance Neighbour - Lucerne Road x 8
- Assault x 2 - School Road - (Market Field School)
Bromley Road - (Male found with head injuries)
- Animal - Church Road - (Dog loose on farm land and killed chickens)
- Motor Vehicle Found - Hatch Croft Gardens - (Stolen vehicle found)
- RTC x 2 - Elmstead Road
Bromley Road

Appendix 2 - Finance Report

Last reconciled closing Balances to end December 13 are:

Current Account to Bank Statement Ref 642	£20254.92
Deposit Account Bank Statement Ref 133	£27,672.97
<i>Estimated Overall Closing Balance</i>	£47927.89

Payment Approval is requested for the following:

<i>In addition the following Direct Debit, Mandated, or Previously Authorised Payments, that have not been previously reported, have been, or will be, made:</i>			
			£
16/01/14	Mr Stan Beecham – Notice Boards	102244	305.52
16/01/14	Office IS	102245	60.91
16/01/14	Vikki Howard - Expenses	102246	49.98
TOTAL			416.41

Report prepared by V Howard
Parish Clerk
9th January 2014

Appendix 3 - Report by the District Councillors

Cllr Fred Nicholls reported that the recommendation from TDC for Council Tax would be to either freeze it or raise it by ½ %

Cllr Rosemary Heaney reported that 2 cars at 19 Holly Way had been removed. There is a suggestion that the owner is going to come down and sort out the trees in the front garden in February.

Appendix 4 – Report by County Councillor Carlo Guglielmi

ECC Report Mid-January 2014

Proposed Budget 2014/15

Cabinet will be looking to agree a rise in Council Tax of 1.49% at its meeting next Tuesday 21st January; this will be the first increase in 4 years which will mean an extra £16 per year on a typical band D property; the extra revenue generated by this will be spent on apprentice- ship schemes, youth funding and vulnerable people.

The Council has still to find £285 million between now and 2016 because of central government grant funding cuts; the proposed budget savings will bring about a £50 million reduction from the £285M shortfall.

The Community Initiative funding will remain at the same level as last year's and an extra £12million will be put in Highways.

The Adult Social Care budget in 2014/15 has been increased by £6.5m to £378m from £371.5m in 2013/14.

The capital programme has been increased to £223 million of which £90 million will be spent on infrastructure to help build our economy as well as provide improved road schemes for our residents.

Extra funding for schools

The Department of Education has released details on various funding streams for local authorities; ECC share is around £114million. £3m will go to improve and refurbish primary school kitchens around the county so that they can all be able to offer hot meals to their pupils. £15m will go to boost funding for early year learning for two year olds from lower income families, but most significantly £96m, the second highest allocation in the country, will be spent on increasing school places which reflects the growing pressure that exists in the education sector.

Community Computing Scheme

ECC has donated over 700 computer system worth £34,000 to charities and community voluntary groups across the county. Dozens of desktops and laptops have been given to various organizations for free which shows the support for the work they do in their community. This

on-going scheme was created alongside the Information Services Modernisation Programme which during its evolution, it decreased the number of computers needed for the business demands thus creating a surplus; these devices are completely cleared of data and then loaded with charity licenced software and then ready for its alternative use and it must be stated that this has no cost to the council as all the data export and re-load is done in house. I have here the link for any organization interested in applying or otherwise please drop me a line <http://www.essex.gov.uk/Business-Partners/Partners/Community-Computing/Pages/Default.aspx>

Second Hand Car Dealing

Complaints about second hand car dealers in Essex have reduced dramatically thanks to a new initiative run by the council's Trading Standards team; the project targets the most complained about car dealers in Essex and helps them to raise their standards for the benefit of consumers.

Trading Standards officers do this by working closely with the dealers to ensure they understand the consequences of unacceptable level of complaints. The team gives them advice, guidance and reviews their procedures.

The project has seen a 43 per cent decrease in complaints regarding the most complained about dealers. Those who do not follow Trading Standards advice and guidance will be subject to enforcement.

I have attached a 7 step checklist when purchasing a second hand car

Essex CC Energy Switch

In line with this morning early breakfast news ECC has launched a new scheme for residents to get cheaper energy; registration is now open for the Essex Energy Switch - a new community scheme which aims to get Essex residents a better deal on their gas and electricity bills.

The scheme is being run by Essex County Council in partnership with District, Borough and City councils, and delivered by iChoosr, an independent provider which specialises in collective energy switching.

Collective energy switching works by bringing together large groups of residents who want to switch providers and pay less for their energy. Based on previous schemes, residents could save up to £133 by switching providers collectively.

Residents can register for the Essex Energy Switch by visiting www.essex.gov.uk/energyswitch between Tuesday 14 January and Monday 17 February. Residents should have a recent energy bill to hand when they register. Businesses on a domestic tariff can also register for the scheme.

On Tuesday 18 February a nationwide one-day 'energy auction' will take place, facilitated by iChoosr. This is where the major energy companies will come forward to offer the lowest energy tariff to everyone who has signed up. The more people that sign up the better the tariff is likely to be. The company offering the lowest price wins!

Once the auction has closed everyone who registered will receive a personal offer of the new tariff from iChoosr, based on their existing energy usage. Residents can then decide whether or not to accept their offer. There is absolutely no obligation to switch. Those who do decide to accept their offer will be contacted by the supplier to arrange the switch.

Residents have until Monday 17th February to sign up for the Essex Energy Switch by visiting www.essex.gov.uk/energyswitch. The website also features further advice on saving energy in the home.