

**Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of
Elmstead Parish Council
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET**

Present: Councillors Bell (Chairman), Brock, Fairweather, Redding, Routledge, Beard and Kirby

Also present: District Councillor Rosemary Heaney, District Councillor Fred Nicholls and 3 members of the public

15/078 Election of Chairman

It was resolved that Cllr Bell would continue to be chairman for the forthcoming year.

Proposed: Cllr Redding, Seconded: Cllr Brock

15/079 Election of Vice-Chairman

It was resolved that Cllr Redding would continue to be vice chairman for the forthcoming year.

Proposed: Cllr Bell, Seconded: Cllr Routledge

15/080 Delivery by councillors of their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Declaration of Acceptance of the Code of Conduct.

15/081 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Beecham is on holiday.

15/082 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Non Pecuniary Interests

None

15/083 Approval and signing of the minutes from 16th April 2015

It was resolved to accept the minutes from 16th April 2015 as true and accurate.

Proposed: Cllr Fairweather, Seconded Cllr Beard

15/084 Election of Officers (current officers in brackets)

TDALC (Cllr Bell)
Community Centre (Cllr Beecham)
Public Transport (Cllr Routledge)
Road Safety (Cllrs Bell and Beecham)
Dene Park (Cllrs Bell and Fairweather)
Parish Paths (Cllrs Routledge, Bell and Redding)
Flag Officer (Cllrs Brock and Bell)
Health and safety (Cllrs Beecham, Fairweather and Alan Dingwall)
Village Schools (J Grotier)

The officers for the forthcoming year were agreed as follows:

TDALC: Cllr Bell
Community Centre: Cllr Beecham
Public Transport: Cllr Routledge
Road Safety: Cllrs Bell and Beecham
Dene Park: Cllrs Bell, Fairweather, Beard and Brock
Parish Paths: Cllrs Routledge, Bell and Redding
Flag Officer: Cllrs Brock and Bell

Signature

Date

Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council

Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Health and safety: Cllrs Beecham, Fairweather and Alan Dingwall
Village Schools: Cllr Kirby

15/085 Police Report (Crime information)

The latest report from PC Dan Heard was read as follows:

Assaults on a person – 12, thefts(incl shoplifting) – 18, criminal damages – 9, burglary (incl houses/garages and attempts) – 14, racist incidents(crime) – 5, arson (not endangering life) – 3, serious assault (Grievous bodily harm) – 1
This is a partial breakdown of the crime figures for the 2014/15 end of financial year (total crimes 69).

The report concluded with the hope that we would see more of a police presence in the coming months.

Cllr Beard questioned how many of these crimes were resolved and said that the police follow up to a vehicle break in on his property was very poor.

It was decided to invite PC Dan Heard to our June meeting. It was discussed whether we have any active neighbourhood watch groups (to check) and to include this on the June agenda.

15/086 Public Speaking

There is 5 minutes of public speaking

Please note that any questions that are to do with items on the agenda will be answered under the appropriate agenda item

A resident reported that vehicles have been going through red lights at our new puffin crossing near Budgens. We will pass the information on to the police.

Mr T Vaughan reported that the scaffolding is down on the old post office. The George V letterbox is on a poor state. It will be presented to the Parish Council.

Also, Mr Vaughan has been given the name and address of someone in Halstead who refurbishes such items, and has a small museum.

There has been a meeting with the planning department and they are happy with the new building being solely a residential property.

15/087 County Councillor report

To be shared by e-mail.

15/088 District Councillor reports

Nothing to report as yet.

15/089 Planning

Applications:

None to discuss

Determinations:

15/00024/FUL Elmtree Garage, Colchester Road - Change of use from car showroom (sui generis) to self storage (use class B8) and offices (use class B1). Full approval

15/00025/ADV Elmtree Garage, Colchester Road - Fascia and window signs, gate sign, post and panel sign, and high level flank wall mounted sign (all non-illuminated). Approval

15/00352/FUL Maruna , Clacton Road, Elmstead - Proposed single storey rear extension. Full approval

15/00335/LBC Former Post Office Clacton Road - Demolition of fire damaged building. Full approval

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Date

Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council

Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Any other applications or determinations received after the agenda was issued?

Two new applications were received and there will be a planning committee meeting to discuss them. They are:

Land off Clacton Road, Elmstead - Application No: 15/00675/OUT
Outline application for the residential development of up to 32 dwellings (incorporating 25% affordable housing) with associated open space and infrastructure.

Land adjacent to Public Car Park, Clacton Road, Elmstead – Application No: 15/00679/FUL
Full planning application for the development of 6.no 3 bedroom chalet bungalows.

Cllrs Nicholls and Heaney reported they are provisionally on the planning committee (if voted in). They will be unable to attend our planning committee meeting for that reason, as they get a vote it could be said that they are predetermined.

In a general discussion about the above planning applications it was discussed that the pumping station may not be able to cope with additional houses. It has flooded in the past and had to be tankered. A resident has previously reported that the overflow went along the ditch to the Beth Chatto Gardens.

It was also raised that no public consultation was made for the 32 houses in Clacton Road, despite the developers being advised to do so.

15/090 Finance

To listen to the finance report and approve the payments for May. See appendix 1.

It was resolved to accept the finance report and approve the payments for May.

Proposed: Cllr Fairweather, Seconded: Cllr Kirby

15/091 Accounts

To approve the Parish Council's accounts and Annual Return (Accounting statements and Annual governance statement) for 2014/15. See appendix 2

It was resolved to approve the Parish Council's accounts and Annual Return for 2014/15.

Proposed: Cllr Beard, Seconded: Cllr. Redding

Cllr. Bell thanked Mrs Baxter for her hard work with the accounts.

Cllr. Redding asked that the fixed assets list be included as a Finance Committee agenda item in the first quarter meeting.

15/092 Audit Report and Governance

The following need to be updated/revised or completed:

Standing Orders (to be revised and updated for current legislation) – Cllrs Bell and Fairweather

Signature

Date

Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council

Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Financial Regulations (to be revised and updated for current legislation) – Cllr. Redding

Risk Assessment (to be completed and agreed) – Cllr. Redding

Clerk's contract of employment (to be completed and to include RFO duties) – Cllr. Routledge

In addition our auditor has made suggestions regarding internal control of finances – see appendix 3. – Cllr. Redding

It was agreed that the Clerk could be paid an additional 10 hours in order to revise and update these documents.

Proposed: Cllr. Bell, Seconded Cllr. Redding

15/093 To agree dates of meetings for 15/16:

June 18th, July 16th, August 20th - will we skip an August meeting? September 17th, October 15th, November 19th, December 17th, January 21st, February 18th and March 17th.

The meeting dates were agreed including keeping the August meeting.

15/094 Bluegates Solar Farm £10,000 community benefit payment

An update from the working party and a discussion to decide a shortlist of potential schemes to enable the completion of the acceptance letter for the payment. See appendix 4.

Cllr Routledge went through the shortlist and each scheme was discussed:

- 1) Fitting/furnishing of the new community centre to be built in the next few years – problematic with the required timing of spending the funds within 24 months
- 2) Gates and signage at the entrances to the village – Need to investigate costs. We could have extra planting to mark the entrance but we'd need a contractor to maintain it.
- 3) A scheme with the cricket club to extend their facilities to a wider section of the community – the cricket club have recently received a grant to extend the club, and some of the grant is to widen their sphere of activities. Cllr. Bell to speak to the club.
- 4) Hanging baskets along the main road – There are problems, If they are hung on the lampposts then they need to be inspected and the inspections are expensive. Some lampposts would not support baskets so there would be gaps.
- 5) Upgrading some of the streetlights to LED bulbs – This is already under consideration with the Finance Committee.
- 6) A play area for Elmcroft – This was suggested and mooted in 2006. To look into.
- 7) Allotment land – This will be provided by the current approved developments.
- 8) Youth facilities, eg. MUGA (multi use games area), skateboard area, tennis court, outdoor gym, netball court or trampoline – Where would these go?

The working party will meet again to narrow down the shortlist and investigate the options in greater detail.

Signature

Date

**Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of
Elmstead Parish Council
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET**

To agree that the Parish Council is to open a designated bank account in accordance with item 3 of the offer letter. Cheques drawn on the bank account shall be signed by two members of the Council who are authorized signatories.

It was resolved to open an additional bank account as above.

Proposed: Cllr Bell, Seconded Cllr. Brock

The Clerk is to ask if the payment can be spent on maintenance or if it should all be spent on a capital project.

15/095 New Community Centre working party

To add Cllr Bell as a member of this working party. (Currently Cllrs Beecham, Fairweather, Brock and Routledge)

It was agreed to add Cllr. Bell.

Proposed: Cllr. Brock, Seconded: Cllr Kirby

15/096 Colne School Bus Working Party

An update on the fight against the ECC cuts on the funding of school transport which will affect those students starting at the Colne Community School in September and all following years.

Cllr. Beard: When the school application letters for the September intake were sent to parents there was no mention of the funding changes. Cllr. Gooding says that the changes were put on the website and letters were sent to schools informing them. However the schools were not told it was their responsibility to communicate the changes to parents. So many parents did not know when they made their school choices. There has been a big campaign to reverse the changes.

This issue was called in to be voted on at Essex County Council. 45 voted to keep the school transport funding cuts and 24 voted against. It has been called in twice now and won't be called in again. All the conservative councillors voted to keep the cuts and the other parties voted against.

Cllr. Beard attended the meeting and asked a question regarding the safety aspect of our 11 year olds having to take 2 separate buses to get to the Academy as there is no direct bus, having to wait around in the dark between buses and having to travel past an unsolved murder scene. Cllr. Gooding did not answer the question, but said that he thought the health and safety aspect was exaggerated.

15/097 Market Field Lease

An update. To discuss and agree any further action regarding the renewal of the lease.

There will be a meeting with Mr Gary Smith, the headmaster of Market Field School, to discuss the situation.

Cllr. Guglielmi has asked Cllr. Derrick Louis (ECC) to look into our question of whether we can extend the lease and why Lambert Smith Hampton are not responding to our query.

Signature

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**Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of
Elmstead Parish Council
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET**

15/098 Communications

Items of interest for inclusion in our July Upmarket report.
Cllr. Routledge has ideas and will e-mail the clerk.
In addition to Upmarket we can include village news in the Essex County Standard. Send the details of the two new development applications for the next edition.

15/099 Items for next agenda or for information only

To hear from councillors any items that they would like on the next agenda or of interest only.

The clerk asked if any councillors were interested in training. Add this as an agenda item for June.

The councillors were thanked for their attendance and the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Signature

Date

**Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of
Elmstead Parish Council**
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Appendix 1

Elmstead Parish Council Finance Report

Closing Balances to 30th April 2015 are:

Current Account to Bank Statement Ref 738	£23,739.01
Total uncashed cheques	£1,542.46
Total of cheques below (May payments - request for approval)	£1,649.23
Balance in current account after cheques	£20,547.32
Deposit Account to Bank Statement Ref 141	£27,690.23
Estimated Overall Closing Balance - Current and Deposit	£48,237.55

Income Details for April 2015:

Veolia Refund	£30.00
Precept (inc grant element from TDC)	£14,994.00
Total income for April 2015	£15,024.00

Approval is requested for the following payments:

Elmstead Community Centre – Hall Hire April x 3	£45.00
Zurich Insurance plc – Parish Council Insurance for 01/06/15 – 31/05/16	£888.11
Mrs J Cole – internal audit	£140.00
EALC & NALC affiliation fee for 2015/16	£409.83
EALC end of year accounting workshop	£47.00
Cllr Fairweather expenses – white paint for Elmcroft car park	£31.99
Cllr Beecham expenses – mileage for police partnership conference in Great Dunmow. 58 miles @ 45p/mile	£26.10
Cllr Routledge expenses – mileage for EALC “meet the chairman” event in Great Dunmow. 62 miles @ 45p/mile	£27.90
Mrs. Baxter expenses – mileage for EALC end of year accounting workshop. 62 miles @45p/mile. 10 stamps @54p	£33.30
Total Cheques	£1,649.23

- 1) May Finance Report for 2014 showed an overall estimated closing balance of £42,905.75
- 2) Zurich insurance – this is year 3 of a 3 year agreement.
- 3) End of year accounting workshop – we should get 75% of the cost of this course back as part of the ECC clerk’s bursary

Report prepared by A Baxter – Clerk & RFO
20th May 2015

Signature

Date

Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Appendix 2

Section 1 – Accounting statements 2014/15 for

Enter name of reporting body here: **ELMSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL** Council/Meeting

Readers should note that throughout this annual return references to a 'local council' or 'council' also relate to a parish meeting.

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2014 £	31 March 2015 £	
1 Balances brought forward	36,878	31,142	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2 (+) Annual precept	* 26,793	27,272	Total amount of precept received or receivable in the year. Excludes any grants received.
3 (+) Total other receipts	* 14,728	11,280	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept received (line 2). Include any grants received here.
4 (-) Staff costs	14,169	15,904	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.
5 (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the council's borrowings (if any).
6 (-) All other payments	33,088	15,167	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7 (=) Balances carried forward	31,142	38,623	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6)
8 Total cash and short term investments	31,142	38,623	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March - to agree with bank reconciliation.
9 Total fixed assets plus other long term investments and assets	577,883	579,910	The original Asset and Investment Register value of all fixed assets, plus other long term assets owned by the council as at 31 March
10 Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11 Disclosure note Trust funds (including charitable)	yes	no	The council acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any trust transactions.
		✓	

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2015 the accounting statements in this annual return present fairly the financial position of the council and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date DD/MM/YYYY

I confirm that these accounting statements were approved by the council on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting approving these accounting statements.

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date DD/MM/YYYY

* PRIOR YEAR FIGURES WERE INCORRECT AS STATED IN SECTION 3 OF THE 2013/14 RETURN. THE FIGURES ABOVE ARE RESTATED TO BE ACCURATE.

Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Section 2 – Annual governance statement 2014/15

We acknowledge as the members of:

ELMSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL Council/Meeting

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2015, that:

	Agreed –		'Yes' means that the council:
	Yes	No*	
1 We approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in the way prescribed by law.
2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3 We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with proper practices in doing so.
4 We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the council's accounts.
5 We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly.
6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of the council.
7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8 We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.
9 Trust funds (including charitable) – in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	yes	no	NA
		✓	has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

This annual governance statement is approved by the council and recorded as minute reference

MINUTE REFERENCE

dated 00/00/0000

Signed by:

Chair SIGNATURE REQUIRED

dated 00/00/0000

Signed by:

Clerk SIGNATURE REQUIRED

dated 00/00/0000

*Note: Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response. Describe how the council will address the weaknesses identified.

**Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of
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**ELMSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2015**

INCOME ACCOUNT	£	
PRECEPT	27272.00	
LCTS SCHEME GRANT (TDC)	2716.00	
INTEREST R/C	13.81	
REPAYMENTS	0.00	
DONATIONS	1608.80	
OTHER INCOME	1358.67	
VAT REFUND	3298.46	
GRANTS	<u>2284.54</u>	
		<u>38552.28</u>

EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

WAGES	15903.63	
EXPENSES	454.62	
PHONE & BROADBAND	395.87	
INSURANCE	1109.71	
AUDIT	480.00	
OFFICE EXPENSES	539.72	
COURSES	40.00	
MEMBERSHIPS	570.18	
GENERAL MAINTENANCE	3222.48	
RENTAL AND HIRE	1309.23	
HIGHWAYS	2399.28	
ENERGY	2213.01	
GRANTS GIVEN (INC SEC 137)	2260.00	
PUBLICITY	0.00	
MISCELLANEOUS	<u>174.00</u>	
		<u>31071.73</u>

CUMULATIVE FUND

BALANCE B/F 01.04.14	31142.24
ADD TOTAL INCOME	38552.28
LESS TOTAL EXPENSES	-31071.73
BALANCE AS AT 31ST MARCH 2015	38622.79

Signature

Date

**Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of
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Appendix 3 – Auditor's recommendations

- Consider revising the Clerk's job description to include specific RFO duties as reflected in the contract of employment. The revision could also incorporate changes of wording to enable annualised salary and regular monthly payment (as resolved by council in February 2015);
- To strengthen authorisation of cheques drawn, the council signatories could initial the cheque stub and the invoices / requests for payment;
- As the internal audit is only carried out annually, it would be useful for the councillors to undertake some internal control tasks at different times during the year e.g. quarterly sight of bank statements and bank recs (initialed as evidence of inspection); six monthly inspection of assets on the register to note any refurbishment / replacement needs; familiarisation with location of key files; or other tasks as appropriate;
- Some of the lower value assets included in the asset register could have a zero value for insurance purposes if a claim would not be made to replace them e.g. where their replacement value is lower than the excess on the policy.

Signature

Date

**Minutes 21st May 2015 of Annual Meeting of
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Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET**

Appendix 4

Appendix: Letter to be provided on Parish Council letterhead

[•] May 2015

Mr Luca Di Rico
Bluegates Solar Limited
c/o Quintas Energy UK Limited
16 Hanover Square
Mayfair, London W1S 1HT

Dear Mr Shaffran

**Acknowledgement by the Elmstead Market Parish Council (the Parish Council) of payment of the
Donation and confirmation of the use of the Donation for the benefit of the local community**

The Parish Council acknowledges receipt of the Offer as outlined in your letter of 11th May 2015 and accepts and agrees to the terms of the Offer from Bluegates to provide a one off Donation of £10,000.00 (the Donation). We are pleased to advise that the Donation shall be used to provide the following Community benefit:

[Describe the Community Benefit]

Details of our designated bank account are as follows:

[Insert bank details]

We confirm that the Parish Council and its officers have and shall continue to comply with all laws, statutes and regulations relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption including but not limited to the Bribery Act 2010. We look forward to receiving confirmation from you that Bluegates will be arranging payment of the Donation.

Yours faithfully

For and on behalf of the Elmstead Market Parish Council

Elmstead Market Parish Council
Community Centre, School Road,
Elmstead Market,
Colchester, CO7 7ET

Signature

Date