

**Minutes of the Elmore Parish Council Meeting held at Elmore Village Hall on
Monday 12th March 2012 at 7.45pm**

Subject Heading		Action
Present	Parish Councillors: Mr J Field - Chair – (JF), Mr A Nash – Vice Chair – (AN), Mrs J Hobbs – (JH) & Mrs C Stewart - (CS), Clerk: Mrs J Smeaton – (JS).	
In Attendance	Attending the meeting were: Mr Graham Littleton (District Councillor): PCSO Emma MacDonald, PCSO Sam Jones, Mr Dudley Ford (DF), Mr Gordon Davis (GD), Mrs Helen Bennett, Mrs Jennie Field, Mr Michael Carter.	
1 Apologies	Mr Tony Blackburn (Gloucester County Councillor) and Mr Trevor Jones (Parish Councillor) (TJ).	
	JF opened the meeting at 7.45 pm and welcomed those attending.	
2 Police Report	<p>PCSOs Sam Jones (SJ) and Emma MacDonald (EM) introduced themselves as the new police officers responsible for Elmore. SJ had explained that there had only been one crime since the last report in December 2011. This was when a shed had been broken into and a motorbike had been stolen. There had also been a domestic incident that had been reported last week. There had also been a report of a man with a shotgun shooting at some ducks in the area of the pond near Weir Green. SJ said that apart from the last 2 reported incidents, Elmore had a very low crime rate.</p> <p>Both EM & SJ work Monday to Saturday during the day. They are hoping to be travelling around Elmore a lot more in the day time.</p> <p>JF did mention the amount of fly-tipping that takes place in and around Elmore. SDC do a very good job at collecting the rubbish once it has been left, however JF stated that they were more concerned about reducing the risk of this happening in the first place. SJ asked if there was a neighbourhood watch in place. It was answered that there is one but it is not functioning; however the villagers do look out for each other.</p> <p>SJ did mention that the police can send out a text to villagers making them aware if a crime has taken place, for the villagers to be aware for the next 48 hours etc. It was agreed that this was a good idea and is something to think about. Also JF did mention there is always evidence of substance misuse in lay-bys, SJ pointed out that the local police no longer work at nights and that incidents in Elmore, after hours, would be covered by a police car from Gloucester. However, he did say they could always do a night shift. They did mention that if Elmore Parish Council wanted the police to come out to the village and look at crime prevention, then they would be more than happy to do so.</p> <p>JS to circulate the telephone and email contacts of both Sam and Emma.</p> <p>EM mentioned a new initiative called 'Paws on Patrol' which was due to be launched at Gloucester Park on 12th May 2012 between 12pm and 4pm and is for dog walkers to be able to report a crime and to make other members aware if something out of the ordinary is happening.</p> <p>They also offered to set up their information van in a suitable location in Elmore for villagers to meet them and discuss issues.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">JS</p>
3 Open Question Time	JH had a question on behalf of Mona Roberts. Mrs Roberts stated that the Village Notice Board is now in a very poor condition and wondered if it could be repaired or replaced. This was noted by the PC and it will be considered in due course.	

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	Mr Ford asked about the finances and wondered if the people of the village were allowed to see the accounts. JF stated that the villagers were allowed to see the accounts, however this item wasn't on our Agenda this month but we will but will be included at the next meeting. JH reported that because of a large fallen bough at the pond opposite Barhouse, she proposed that her brother be asked for a quote for tree work around the pond. CS and AN both supported the motion.	JH JS
4 Declarations of Members' Interest in Agenda Items	There were no declarations of interest in any agenda item.	
5 Minutes of Previous Parish Council Meeting	The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 th December 2011 were proposed by AN and seconded by JH as a true record and agreed by all Councillors. At the end of the meeting they were signed off by the Chairman.	
6 Matters Arising	JS had been asked to enter the PC & Printer onto the property book. This has now been actioned. CS previously raised the issue of the pot hole at Elmore Back Road, an email was sent to John Kay, however no response has been received. JF to chase Gloucestershire Highways. Salt Bins have been provided, however these have not yet been used. It has been noticed that water was gathering on the tops of the salt bins. TJ has already drilled holes through the bottom of the bins so that the water can drain out. The 'School Admission Paper' was discussed at the last meeting; action is still required. JF to action. Flooding – the distribution of the letter written to Richard Benyon MP has been actioned by JF. No further action required.	JF TJ JF
7 County Councillor's Report	Cllr Tony Blackburn was unable to attend so no County Councillor's report was given to the meeting.	
8 District Councillor's Report	Cllr Graham Littleton (SDC) attended the meeting and gave a short brief on topical matters at the District Council. He mentioned that a local authority mortgage scheme has been put in place. This is for people who could afford a mortgage but cannot save enough for a deposit. There has been good progress made to provide rural affordable housing. A suitable site has now been found in Whitminster. GL attended the Sellar's Farm enquiry which lasted 4 days. The results are expected in April.	
9 Flooding - Landowners Responsibilities.	JF explained that there was an updated policy document, recently published by the Environmental Agency on their website which highlights the responsibilities of landowners and river dwellers. JF has already sent copies of this document to all landowners along the 4km stretch of the River Severn within Elmore. These documents were called 'Living on the Edge' and the 'Protocol for Maintenance in Flood Risk Areas'. Mr Carter stated that he was worried that the 'Living on the Edge' document doesn't cover the houses, just the farms. This point was noted.	
10 Emergency Plan	JF stated that he had recently attended a briefing by SDC on the need for parishes to have their own Emergency Plans. He explained that we have had various bad floods over the past few years as well as heavy snow, strong storms and a foot and mouth epidemic in 2001, all of which disrupted village life. Such events have affected the village for many years and as there was	AN

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	<p>now considerable help available JF wondered if now was the time to produce our own Emergency Plan. JF therefore proposed that a draft plan be produced for wider consultation and consideration. AN seconded this motion and it was unanimously passed. No time deadline was fixed.</p>	
<p>11 Elmore Parish Design Statement</p>	<p>AN explained the rationale behind Elmore having its own ‘Design Statement’ and that there wasn’t a basic guideline for planning applications. This results in the odd planning proposal for Elmore that doesn’t fit in with the village. AN did mention that Longney and Epney have a Design Statement which highlights particular qualities and ideas that contribute to the quality of village life.</p> <p>There was some discussion about the ‘ownership’ of this document and AN stated that it would be produced by consultation but would be owned by the Parish Council.</p> <p>Once produced and agreed, the Design Statement is sent to SDC but EPC can alter/update and change items on the document. AN was asked to obtain an example of an electronic copy and distribute it to councillors so that it could be discussed at the next meeting.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">AN</p>
<p>12 Consultation with Environment Agency</p>	<p>JF reported that the briefing to the Severn Voice Group of Parishes by the Environment Agency was held on Tuesday 6th March. This briefing followed several months of talks with the EA and the briefing was expected to throw some light on a way forward following the publication in January 2011 of the EA’s proposals to flood large areas of farmland within the Severn Voice parishes.</p> <p>Sadly, there was a disappointing attendance from parish councillors and a lack of substance from the EA presentation.</p> <p>No new proposals were offered, however the EA did produce some new figures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The sea level rise is now predicted to be 0.72m over the next 100 years. The amount of wildlife habitat now required is 1,500 ha and not 3,500 ha. Some of this new habitat total (+/- 450 ha) has already been taken up by the project at Steart Peninsula in Somerset. <p>The EA propose to visit the village to ‘consult’ parishioners but as of yet, they haven’t anything new to offer.</p> <p>Therefore, JF proposed that he writes to the EA’s new Engagement Officers spelling out our concerns and as they haven’t made any proposals for a new strategy, we would lay out some ideas of our own as a possible way forward; e.g:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status Quo – (The EA continues current maintenance of flood defences) Status Quo Plus – (The EA continues current maintenance and react to trigger events such as sea level rise in say 20 years) Managed Retreat – (The EA clearly identifies areas they consider uneconomic and then puts in place a plan which protects dwellings, farms and quality farmland.) Maintenance by Proxy – (The responsibility for maintenance is taken over by a third party e.g. GCC, SDC, landowners, local businesses and tenant farmers but with the funds that were previously allocated to the Defra and EA). <p>JF stated that these are only ideas that can be discussed and if the EA doesn’t like them, they must produce alternatives.</p> <p>This proposal was unanimously accepted.</p> <p>JF wants to get the EA’s engagement officers to visit Elmore for the whole</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JF</p>

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	<p>day, take them round Elmore and show what and who is going to be affected. However, he is not prepared to do so until there are signs that the EA have something positive to discuss as well as the answers to outstanding questions.</p>	
<p>13 War Memorial Update</p>	<p>JF spoke for TJ in his absence. The repair bill for the War Memorial is going to be around £900, however VAT can be claimed back on this. A grant has been applied for from the War Memorials Trust and also a formal letter has been sent to Mr Watts asking for a donation from the Elmore Charity. JF-stated that a contribution will need to be made from EPC funds; JF proposed £150.00 and AN seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed. The PC would also need to cover the cost of VAT initially whilst this is being recovered.</p>	
<p>14 Planning Applications Update: Wind Turbine land near Velthouse Farm</p>	<p>JF stated that as the issue of Wind Turbines was such a contentious issue he was prepared to break from normal procedure and permit statements and questions from interested parties during the discussion. JF invited the applicant, Mr Littleton (GL) to make a statement. GL made a long statement on his proposal, the main points were: All correspondence is available on the SDC website; The application was originally submitted to SDC in March 2011; The application was being handled by his Agent; The proposal had been made at the suggestion of GL's bank as an investment opportunity; The turbine was to provide a source of income rather than help with the farm operations; The turbine could only be located near Velthouse Farm in order to feed into the 3-phase power lines near there; The turbine would be 27 metres tall.</p> <p>Mr Ford made a statement in which he expressed concern that the application had been permitted to get this far. He was concerned that this turbine, which was actually 33.5 metres tall including the blades, would be a blot on the landscape and could set a precedent, thus encouraging many more in the village. He asked for the application to be withdrawn.</p> <p>Mr Davis (GD) stated that he considered that the planning applications for a similar turbine at Hollow Farm seemed to have been handled differently by SDC in regards to notification of the public, signs etc. He stated that he fully supported the Hollow Farm turbine application as this was to be of direct benefit to the business rather than a money-making project. GD also stated that such a turbine in the village would have detrimental affects on the values of those properties within close proximity. GD also asked if the applicant would still go ahead with the construction of the turbine if permission was granted by SDC.</p> <p>GL answered GD's questions by stating that he had nothing to do with the signs that SDC put up. However, he refused to answer the question regarding construction if he obtained planning permission.</p>	

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	<p>During the lively discussions it was necessary for JF to call the meeting to order several times as questions were not being directed through the 'Chair'.</p> <p>AN pointed out that we were still awaiting responses from the 'Agent' to several issues raised by SDC. Once these answers were forthcoming we would comment on them if asked.</p> <p>JF drew the discussion to a close by stating that all interested parties had been given the opportunity to comment to SDC and that these comments were now available on the website. It was now a matter for SDC, in accordance with our democratic principles, to make the final decision.</p>	
15 Date of next meeting	<p>The next meeting was scheduled for Monday 14th May 2012 which was to be the Annual Parish & Annual Parish Council Meeting.</p> <p>Venue, Elmore Village Hall at 7.45pm</p>	
	<p>Chair.....</p> <p>Date.....</p>	