

**Minutes of the Elmore Annual Parish Meeting held at Elmore Village Hall on  
14<sup>th</sup> May 2012 at 7.45pm**

<b>Subject Heading</b>		<b>Action</b>
<b>Present</b>	Parish Councillors: Mr J Field - Chair – (JF), Mr A Nash – Vice Chair – (AN), Mrs J Hobbs – (JH) & Mr T Jones – (TJ). Clerk: Mrs J Smeaton – (JS).	
<b>In Attendance</b>	Those present: Mr Graham Littleton (District Councillor), Gordon Davis (GD), Helen Bennett, Mona Robertson, Brenda Lovell, Barry Overton, Val Overton, Jennie Field & Denise Barker. Mr Tony Blackburn (Gloucester County Councillor) - late arrival.	
<b>1. Apologies</b>	Clare Stewart (CS) (Parish Councillor). PCSO Emma McDonald & PCSO Sam Jones.	
	John Field opened the meeting at 7.45pm and welcomed those attending.	
<b>2. Police Report</b>	No police were in attendance, but JS had been informed that there was nothing to report since the previous meeting.	
<b>3. Open Question Time</b>	JF reminded the attendees of the protocol for the Open Question session which was that all questions and statements were to be made to the Chair and no questions were to be directed to anyone else attending. If an answer was required, the Chair may answer or invite someone else to speak. If an answer cannot be provided at the time, the answer may be deferred to a later meeting. It was mentioned that the Gloucestershire Village Agent – Christine Lingard (contact 07810 63179) - had sent an information flyer around the village recently with the Church newsletter, Brenda Lovell stated the Village Agent was very well known around the area. JF stated there were about 46 people at present on the village contact database; although some are duplicated as they cover different people in the same household. There is the need for more contacts. Barry Overton raised the issue of the speed of the farm vehicles down Elmore Back. JF is to follow up the issue.	<b>JF</b>
<b>4. Declaration of Member's Interest in Agenda items</b>	There were no declarations of interest in any agenda item.	
<b>5. Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2011</b>	The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 27 <sup>th</sup> April 2011 were proposed by TJ and seconded by AN as a true record. At the end of the meeting they were signed off by the chairman.	
<b>6. Matters arising from the minutes of 27<sup>th</sup> April 2011</b>	The Chairman (JF) gave a detailed report on matters arising, these are summarised below: <b>Bus Fares</b> – Villagers can use their bus passes to get out of Elmore before 09.30, however if they wish to change buses at Waterwells before the 09.30 deadline, this would not be possible! <b>The Audit</b> - this was successfully carried out last year and there were no adverse comments. <b>Litter Picking</b> – TJ explained that this is going well; however the fly-tipping is still an issue. SDC is very good at collecting fly-tipped rubbish as soon as the matter is raised. <b>Flooding Issues</b> – This is covered in Item 13 below. <b>War Memorial</b> – This is covered in Item 18 below.	
<b>7. Finance Report, audit status, risk</b>	JF stated that EPC's finances are in a very healthy position. A couple of the items on the forecast expenditure are the contingency fund and the pond	

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<p><b>assessment &amp; insurance</b></p>	<p>maintenance. After these have been taken into account, the accounts still look good. The matter of funding a new village notice board was raised; TJ offered to research the costs and this item will be put onto the next agenda for the July meeting. JF proposed that £250 was voted over for the Jubilee celebrations, TJ seconded this motion and it was unanimously carried. TJ asked about claiming back VAT on the computer that was bought and also for the war memorial repairs. JS is to investigate the process for re-claiming VAT. The reclaimed VAT would feature as an income on the accounts spread sheet. JH proposed and TJ seconded this. The accounts for last years are still to be audited internally and externally. This matter was in hand. There has been no change in the risk assessment. The Annual Insurance Premium has stayed nearly the same; a cheque for the premium renewal was signed at the end of the meeting. The insurance cover will need to be reviewed during next year to ensure we are getting value for money</p>	<p><b>TJ</b></p>
<p><b>8. Adoption of Income/Expenditure Statement for 2011/12</b></p>	<p>The accounts for EPC were published on the finance sheet 2011/2012 which had been distributed prior to the meeting and subsequently displayed on the Village Notice Board. This showed a current balance of £3,834.72, which included the ring-fenced contingencies of the Emergency Fund of £1,300 and Pond Maintenance of £600. The only income for the year had been the Precept of £2,400. The year-end disposable income was therefore £1934.72. JF stated that the account was in a healthy state.</p>	
<p><b>9. The Precept for 2012/13</b></p>	<p>JF proposed that the precept remains the same for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row (at £2,400). This motion was carried unanimously. JF stated that although SDC claimed that there had been no increase in their Council Tax charges, they should see a slight percentage increase in the Precept, despite no increase! JF stated that he would draft a letter to the SDC for the Parish Clerk who will to send it to SDC with regards to this supposed increase in the Precept.</p>	<p><b>JF</b></p>
<p><b>10. District Councillor's Report</b></p>	<p>Councillor Graham Littleton (SDC) (GL) attended the meeting and made a short statement as follows: The local election in the Hardwicke Ward that took place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2012 was won by Russell Miles (Con). GL also mentioned the proposed development at Sellars Farm; SDC is awaiting the Inspector's report, GL will keep us updated. JF raised the matter of why SDC had changed its stance on the support of the proposed incinerator at Javelin Park, GL stated that SDC had raised some new issues with GCC and said this matter was unlikely to go before Committee before August.</p>	
<p><b>11. County Councillor's Report</b></p>	<p>Councillor Tony Blackburn (GCC) (TB) attended the meeting and made a short statement. He explained how GCC were being constrained by the reduction in national budgets. Shire hall staff has been cut by 1500. GCC no longer pay for some libraries and youth centres. There are only 7 main youth centres that are run by the County.</p>	<p><b>JF</b></p>

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	<p>There is £100 million of extra money available from Central Government that is to be used to upgrade broadband services in rural areas such as Elmore.</p> <p>JF stated the EPC has been trying to raise the issue of the poor broadband in the village for the last few years; however we have been unsuccessful as BT failed to install a new cable under the canal despite three attempts. JF was asked to send copies of previous correspondence with BT to TB who will put our case to GCC.</p>	
<p><b>12. Highways, Rights of Way &amp; Common Land</b></p>	<p>JF stated that the Parish Council isn't responsible for the footpaths, the landowners and Gloucestershire County Council are.</p> <p>It was mentioned that EPC had been approached on the matter of a new water main through Kenton Green; the Parish Council own this patch of land.</p> <p>Barry Overton mentioned that Gloucester Highways were out doing a vehicle survey in and around Elmore and that potholes on Lake Street had been completed.</p> <p>JF stated that we had had good support from Gloucester Highways of the last year.</p>	
<p><b>13. Flood Defences and the Environment Agency's Plans for Elmore - Update</b></p>	<p>John Field had written to the Environment Agency (EA) as directed by EPC at the March meeting concerning proposals for the New Flood Risk Strategy.</p> <p>JF has only received a written reply that day (14<sup>th</sup> May); he gave a short resumé of the reply which included the following facts:</p> <p>The EA stated that the flood defences in the Elmore would last until the year 2060.</p> <p>The EA stated that the current flood risk in Elmore was 1 in 50 however, he pointed out that history has proved this statistic incorrect.</p> <p>JF stated that flood resilience measures might be a key factor for homes near the River.</p> <p>Despite the apparent improvement in future flood risk JF stated that there had been no real change since the publication of the EA's Report in January 2011. The EA have now managed to make the situation appear better by interpreting the 'risk' in a different way which resulted in a lower sea level rise over the next 100 years (now 0.7m rather than 1m). This apparent reduced sea level rise meant that less area would be flooded along Severn Estuary and fewer hectares of wildlife habitat would need to be reclaimed elsewhere, such as Elmore Back.</p> <p>An open village meeting with the EA is due to be arranged so the parishioners can discuss the issues and try to make progress about the future maintenance of the River Severn flood defences.</p> <p>JF restated the ideas which were sent to the EA and highlighted the EA's responses and these were discussed:</p> <p><b>Status Quo</b> – (The EA continues to maintain the flood defences as at present). EA stated that there is no public funding available for this option.</p> <p><b>Status Quo Plus</b> – (The EA continues to maintain the flood defences and reacts to trigger points such a sea level rises) Again, funding is the issue, there is no guarantee that any future maintenance of flood defences will be carried out.</p> <p><b>Managed Retreat</b> – (The EA clearly identifies the areas they consider uneconomical then puts plans in place to protect dwellings, farms etc) Once</p>	

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	<p>again funding is the issue. There are grants available to help homeowners by the EA is not responsible for them. The only way funding will become available for major flood defence work is by the creation of wildlife habitats. This can only be done with the consent of landowners who agree that their land can be flooded to create saltmarsh grazing or wildlife habitats.</p> <p><b>Maintenance by Proxy</b> – (The responsibility for maintenance is taken over by a third party e.g. GCC, SDC, landowners, local businesses and tenant farmers with the funds previously available to Defra and EA). Needless to say that the funding issue blocks this option too.</p> <p>In short, the EA is abrogating any responsibility for maintaining flood defences along the River Severn in line with their ‘permissive powers’.</p> <p>JF has been involved in the drafting of a letter to our local MP from the Severn Voice parishes to and explain how we are not happy with the EA’s approach and are far from any progress being made.</p> <p>JF will keep interested parties updated as new information becomes available.</p>	<b>JF</b>
<p><b>14. The need for an Elmore Emergency Plan - Update</b></p>	<p>Following on from the discussion of this topic at the last EPC meeting, JF has revisited the need for Elmore Parish to have an Emergency Plan. JF recommended that it would be prudent to have one as Elmore Village has come near to having emergencies and disasters in the past. In view of this; JF has started to compile a draft document. A hard copy for comments will be sent round in due course. He highlighted the objectives and possible emergencies that might be covered in such a plan:</p> <p><b>Objectives of this Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify what risks the community could face</li> <li>▪ Highlight relevant response actions for each type of risk</li> <li>▪ Identify vulnerable groups in the community</li> <li>▪ Identify resources in the community available to assist during an emergency</li> <li>▪ Provide key contact details for the Community Response Group, Key Community Resources, the Emergency Services and Local Authorities</li> </ul> <p><b>Possible Emergencies.</b> The types of emergencies that would have an impact on our community are shown below. These emergencies have been placed in categories to indicate their likelihood based on past experience:</p> <p><b>Category 1 – Highly likely to happen and has happened before</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flooding – overtopping of the flood defences on the River Severn. (1947, 1965, 1999 &amp; 2002)</li> <li>• Flooding – surface water caused by heavy rain (e.g. as per the floods in July 2007)</li> <li>• Farm diseases which affect movement and isolate parts of the community. (e.g. Foot &amp; Mouth)</li> </ul> <p><b>Category 2 – Possible</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extreme weather – heavy snow storms which overload the road clearing services.</li> <li>• Extreme weather – Storms/wind damage and tree blow-down which blocks roads.</li> <li>• Power failure – widespread failure over a lengthy period especially</li> </ul>	

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	<p>in the winter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water shortage and/or water supply failure or pollution of mains water caused by another emergency.</li> <li>• Follow-up action as required after an emergency has been dealt with by the relevant Emergency Service.</li> </ul> <p><b>Category 3 – Remote possibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major road traffic accident within the Village</li> <li>• Aircraft or helicopter crash</li> <li>• Bomb threat</li> </ul> <p>Liaison with SDC still needs to be done as funding is available to buy certain key pieces of equipment, such as two-way radios, signs, torches and survival kits etc. JF intends to get the draft approved by December so this can then be a living document.</p>	<b>JF</b>
<b>15. The need for an Elmore Design Statement - Update</b>	<p>The Chair invited Andy Nash (AN) to lead on this matter. Longney and Epney Villages have already produced a Design Statement and this is available for others to view on their website. AN explained that their design statement had more than what is needed, but this can be used as a draft and we can adapt it to fit Elmore Village. AN will have the first draft ready by the next meeting. Thoughts will be welcome as this is being produced.</p>	<b>AN</b>
<b>16. Broadband and telephone lines - Update</b>	<p>Many more people within the village now have the facility to have broadband and a lot more people now have independent rather than shared telephone lines. However pressure will be kept onto BT. As stated earlier, Cllr Anthony Blackburn is going to look into this and will let us know any updates.</p>	
<b>17. Maintenance of Millennium Ponds</b>	<p>Water levels are up for the first time in a year. JF stated that there is a large amount of tree cutting to be done. The priority is the pond opposite Barhouse farm. This will be actioned soon.</p>	<b>JF</b>
<b>18. War Memorial Update</b>	<p>Trevor Jones (TJ) led on this item. TJ has accepted an estimate for repairs of the War Memorial of £690. It is expected that there may be a 5% increase in the price as the process of research and preparation of a grant application to the War Memorials Trust (WMT) has taken time, leading to approximately the final cost being about £725. On 14<sup>th</sup> March 2012, we were offered a grant from the WMT which will be paid into our bank account on proof of satisfactory completion of the work. TJ has returned a declaration form, signed by McAllister Masonry to WMT stating that they understand the conditions governing grant aided work. As far as WMT is concerned, we may now go ahead to complete the work and we have one year to achieve this. A letter was sent to Elmore Land Charity requesting a grant of £137 towards the work, we are awaiting a reply. £150 has also been set aside from EPC to help with the cost of the work. JF proposed for an increase of £50 for the work from EPC to allow from a possible increase in process since the original quote and for McAllister to start the work. AN seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously. TJ will tell McAllister to get started.</p>	<b>TJ</b>
<b>19. Date of next</b>	<p>The date for the next Annual Parish Meeting is to be announced for</p>	

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<b>meeting</b>	sometime in May 2013	<b>JS</b>
	Chairman.....  Date.....	