

**Minutes of Elmore ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
held on Tuesday 24th May at 7 pm 2022
in Elmore Village Hall**

Present: Parish Councillors: Chair Nick Meek (NM), Vice Chair Mike Hodge (MH), Jane Hill (JH) , Vince Meredith (VM) , Matt Brandon (MB), Dorie Jones (Clerk)

In Attendance: Mr Trevor Jones, Mr John Field, Cllr Gill Oxley and Cllr Stephen Davies

1. Apologies:

2. Chairman's Annual Statement / Report

Changes to the Parish Council:

There has been one significant change to Councillors this year; John Field retired from the council last December after 13 years as Chair and 17 years on the Parish Council; the newly elected Councillor is Matt Brandon. I have replaced John as Chair and Mike Hodge is the Vice Chair.

Vote of Thanks

A personal 'thank you' goes out to John who has served the community in a voluntary capacity on the Parish Council for many years and who has made a great contribution to Parish life. In particular,

- John put in a terrific amount of time and effort to improve the telephone and broadband services to our village.
- He went into battle with the EA over their proposed Severn Estuary Flood Risk Management Strategy
- He initiated the production of the Emergency plan

During his time quite a lot was achieved:

- The Bridge started
- Two Defibrillators installed and training arranged
- Website set up

All of this has made the residents of Elmore and the Parish Councillors life a bit easier, but he is a very tough act to follow.

Chair's Annual Statement

After thinking long and hard, my conclusion is that, with the exception of Covid, it's been a fairly normal year with business as usual for the council with regards to village activities. This entails carrying out our role with regards to planning issues, maintaining the highways and byways, litter, managing our assets and generally trying to maintain/enhance the village we live in.

Covid restrictions have meant that a number of village events have had to be cancelled which was a real shame but ultimately necessary to protect the vulnerable and reduce the spread.

I would like to repeat what John said last year in thanking all those in the village who rallied round to

help their neighbours and anyone else who may not have had family close by during these rather difficult and strange times we have lived through.

It is great to see that we seem to be leaving Covid behind, with people returning back to the office/enjoying social events and things are getting back to some sort of normality.

The Parish finances are in good health, as we have not had any major expenditure throughout this period. Our bank balance stands at £7,669 and our regular expenditure on insurance, memberships, Defibrillator maintenance, printing of The Bridge and the Clerk's salary, have continued throughout the year.

Your Parish Council decided that the Parish Precept should remain unchanged again for this financial year and is currently £2,470. Our internal audit was conducted successfully and we continue to follow the financial transparency guidelines by publishing any expenditure over £100 on our Parish website. We review the financial situation at every Parish Council meeting by producing the financial statement for scrutiny by Councillors.

3. Police Report – from PCSO's Ben Rollins and Gordon McGaugie

We have had a few complaints and concerns over the parking around the bridges. I have spoken to Gloucester council to request yellow lines to be added or improved.

We are attending the Pilot Pub on a regular basis and addressing any concerns that they may have. We are told by management that they are having a pub family day at the end of June. This will take place in the garden area of the pub. We have also been to and attended the Wholly Gelato farm. Purely on the basis of public visibility.

We are also on our third article for the Hardwicke matters publication. This is going very well and we have had people contact us for advice and guidance.

Twitter is regularly updated by ourselves and on-going patrols of the area. Please search for **Glos Neighbourhood Police**

Any information that we do have is also posted via the community alerts system.

Up to date information as regards any current statistics can be found at the following address and by placing in a post code for a specific area.

I have also included the link for ask the police. This is also available on a mobile application to download.

<https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area> and <https://www.askthe.police.uk>

We actively encourage persons to report any incidents via 101 to be dealt with and recorded accordingly.

Any direct e-mails to our accounts will not be dealt with officially as we cannot generate incident numbers from the office. Anything that requires an incident number must be called in via 101/999 or online.

HQ are also once again holding the 'open day'. This should be on the 17th of September and will be advertised shortly.

4. Open Question Time

<p>Qu: What can be done to reduce the speed of traffic through the village? Cllr Davies offered to organize a ‘speed check’ survey with Highways. Last survey carried out 10 years ago. Results could help us plan what needs to happen/our next steps forward. He offered to provide a portion of funding from his reserves. It was thought that poor drivers included locals and outsiders attending weddings or coming for ice creams are mostly to blame. NM thought the enhanced Elmore entry signs could include a message to encourage consideration towards residents, walkers, cyclists, animals and other vehicles could be a good idea. Wheelie Bin signage of ‘20 is plenty’ could be introduced even although only visible 1 day each 2 weeks might help too. All opportunities to slow people down will be explored and we would welcome all ideas and suggestions.</p>	
<p>5 Declaration of Member’s interest in Agenda items. No declarations were made</p>	
<p>6 Minutes of the Previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th May 2021 These were proposed as a true record by MH and seconded by VM.</p>	
<p>7 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th May 2021 Emergency Plan – Medical pandemic added by John Field Grand Picnic for 2nd June will be minuted in (8)</p>	
<p>8. Queen’s Platinum Jubilee including Tree Planting Open to residents/relatives. Approx 170 people have booked to attend. There is a Jubilee Committee including NM and JH from the Parish Council. A plan to plant a tree with a commemorative plaque is being considered and one or two possible plots have been identified.</p>	
<p>9 Finance: <i>DJ emailed the spreadsheet information to the Council and published them on the website</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Review of Parish Precept 2022/2023. The Parish Precept remains unchanged at £2,470.00 although our Council Tax bills show an increase of 4.4% levy to Elmore. This is based on changing numbers of unoccupied property. There are no plans to change anything for the following financial year. ii) Account and Audit 2021/2022 Following our internal Audit, this work is complete and ready for the Council to approve. iii) Forecast Expenditure 2022/2023. The forecast of expenditure remains roughly the same as for the previous Financial Year although there will be an increase in Verge Cutting Costs with immediate effect. iv) Community Based projects. When these have been costed, they will be added to the spreadsheet. 	
<p>10 County Councillor This year the theme of the Gloucestershire County Council budget is “Build back better.” This year’s budget will be £519.6 million, an increase of £37m on last year. This includes an extra £100m for roads, £150m injection into school buildings and further investment in our market towns and high streets. There is a focus on supporting and protecting the most vulnerable in our community, including a £14m additional investment in Children and Young people services. There is an additional £1m fund to go towards Climate Change in addition to the existing plans for major cycle routes. The budget also allocates £30k to each Councillor to invest in local highways schemes. This is funded through a Council Tax increase of 1.99%, securing £10.2m</p>	

<p>and a 1% Adult Social Care levy generating an additional £3.7m to protect the most vulnerable. Based on a Band D property, this equates to an increase of £3.50 / month. Despite the increased investment this should still have Gloucestershire as one of the lowest Council Taxes of any County Council.</p> <p>Ofsted recently upgraded Children’s Services from inadequate to requires improvement recognising Children in Gloucestershire are safer now.</p> <p>krainian refugees. There are 2 schemes, the first is where people with family connections are offering accommodation, this is beginning to see some refugees arriving in Gloucestershire. The second is the National Scheme where people have volunteered their homes for refugees. In Gloucestershire over 200 people have offered help, this will now be followed with a check on whether the accommodation is suitable and an accelerated DBS check. So far over 500 refugees have been housed in Gloucestershire. Additional money has been provided to fund schools and other services. I have volunteered for this scheme my family arrived on Wednesday 11th May. We are now in a phase of Living with Covid and it is not clear how long this will go on. It means that occasionally we see a disruption in services including schools due to staff absences, but generally in Gloucestershire we have seen a good provision of local services throughout the pandemic, although I like others are increasingly concerned about Covid being used as an excuse for delays.</p> <p>More locally I have been working on the concern over Secondary School places. Although all applicants for Secondary schools from last year got their 1st or 2nd choice, there is an acknowledged concern over Secondary School provision. There is a specific issue for 2023 for which extra capacity is planned. In the longer-term work is being done on capacity planning and we await the conclusion from this, but my personal belief is that we will need an additional Secondary School and we need to start the process to identify a site and build one. This requires Department for Education support. With Primary Schools there has been an expansion in capacity with a new school in Hunts Grove and one planned in Great Oldbury.</p> <p>A “Speedwatch” scheme has been announced which includes funding for VAS and “20 is plenty” signs. I have shared this with the Elmore Parish Council.</p>	
<p>11 District Councillor Gill Oxley said that the £150 tax rebate had been sent to many of the properties in bands A- D.</p> <p>Cllr Oxley was to meet with SDC enforcement officer Sophie Hollins about planning infringements.</p>	
<p>12 Highways</p> <p>Rubbish in Layby’s The temporary bins installed by EPC seem to have had a positive effects so JH has been in touch with SDC about the installation of permanent bins which can be emptied on a regular basis.</p> <p>Fly Tipping SDC are picking up reported fly tipped rubbish. However, rubbish has recently been dumped on private land. SDC cannot collect this and it becomes the responsibility of the land owner.</p>	
<p>13 Emergency Plan Update: John Field updated this and handed it over to NM/MB.</p>	
<p>14 Parish Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website: Kept up to date. • The Bridge: The 30th Edition of The Bridge is due to come out at the end of May. Trevor Jones is continuing to edit this. • Email: Addresses given to the Chairman to hold are kept strictly confidential to comply 	

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with Data Regulations Guidance.	
15 Planning Applications: Review/Update: Following the Elmore Court application. 6 Tree Houses were approved. Haywicks Lane Barn application was refused in 2021 and enforcement of planning is ongoing. Hollow Farm had an application refused.	
16 Any Other Business The Phone Box Defibrillator has been repainted through the Community Payback Scheme. Possible other ideas are being considered.	
Date of the Next Annual Parish Meeting – Date to be arranged in May 2023	
The Chairman thanked those present for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.20 pm.	
Signed Date May 2023	