

**Minutes of the Meeting of Elmsted Parish Council  
held in the Village Hall on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

<b>Present</b>	Cllr Argar in the Chair	Cllr Burge
	Cllr Castle	Cllr Fox
	Cllr Francesconi	Cllr Phipps
	Cllr Mrs Rountree	

Cllr Susan Carey attended the meeting and there were three members of the public in attendance.

Cllr Argar welcomed the new Councillors on to the Council.

There were no apologies for absence

There were no declarations of interest

**Minutes** of the last meeting were approved as a true record.

**Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

Land outside Westford – The Clerk explained that Cllr Burge had suggested Richard Honey as “the man in the know” about common land laws and the Clerk had contacted him, he is happy to assist. The Clerk is trying at present to ascertain through the County Council as to whether the land is Common land or a Village Green. Once this is known Mr Honey will assist with guiding the Council along the correct path to avoid the annexing of this piece of land.

**Election of Officers**

Cllr Argar vacated the Chair. Cllr Francesconi proposed and Cllr Mrs Rountree seconded that Cllr Argar be elected as the Chairman. There being no other nominations, Cllr Argar was duly elected and took the Chair again.

Cllr Argar proposed and Cllr fox seconded that Cllr Francesconi be elected as Vice-Chairman, there being no other nominations, Cllr Francesconi was duly elected.

**Correspondence**

The Clerk distributed the Code of Conduct/Register of members’ Interests forms for Councillors to complete.

**Financial Statement was approved.**

Cheques were signed for KALC, Aon Ltd (Insurance), Evington Hall and T Block for the Clerks Remuneration from 2010

**Approval and Acceptance of the Annual Accounts**

The Annual accounts and the Accounting Governance Statement were approved and signed by the Chair of the Parish Council and are ready for the Internal Audit inspection.

**Planning**

The Council had received one application. Cllr Argar declared an interest in the application. As this application is for a property that is not well known and it is a very different design it was agreed that a site meeting would be arranged. Cllrs are to let the Clerk know of their availability for 17<sup>th</sup> May and the Clerk will communicate with Cllr Argar who will arrange a site visit with the land owners. The Clerk is to email the Councillors with a link to the application.

## **Cllr Carey**

Cllr Carey gave her report to the Parish Council. As below:

“Kent County Council faces an enormous challenge in reducing expenditure at a time of rising demand for its services. The money that goes directly to schools is broadly the same but many of the extra services provided by KCC have lost grant funding. Elsewhere our grants from central government (our share of business rates and other taxation) have been reduced by 10%.

Overall we must deliver £95m of savings in 2011/12. We are doing this by reorganising and shedding 1,500 posts. We hope to keep redundancies to a minimum and have been holding many posts vacant in anticipation of the need for savings. We have frozen staff pay for the second year in a row.

Rather than cutting some discretionary services we are increasing charges so there will still be a Freedom Pass for 11 – 16 year olds but the price rises to £100 (still an excellent deal and worth over £400 to each user). Bus routes where the subsidy per person per journey is more than £5 are also being examined and if cheaper ways are not found to provide them they will be withdrawn.

We have sought to protect services to the vulnerable – children at risk (where our service needs considerable improvement), the elderly needing care and adults with learning difficulties and mental health problems but we are asking all our partners to work with us to reduce costs and make sure the money we do spend is spent on frontline services not support costs.

The budget for Highways will be spent almost exclusively on maintenance with a small amount for reducing congestion and crash remedial measures.

You will be pleased to know that there will be no council tax increase for 2011/12 and we are still investing in Kent. Our plans are set out in ***Bold Steps for Kent*** which sets out three ambitions – to grow our economy, to put the citizen in control and to tackle disadvantage.

I am pleased that the village signs I funded for Elmsted through the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty have at long last been erected. They are recycled plastic so of no interest to metal thieves and the lettering is recessed rather than proud which makes them less vulnerable to vandalism.

I wish the new parish council all the best for their term of office and look forward to working with them.”

Cllr Carey also spoke of the problems facing East Kent following the announcement of Pfizers withdrawal from the area and also of the problems caused by the large number of Foster families based in Thanet.

The Clerk explained about the problems she is facing when logging pot holes, it was thought a site meeting with the liaison officer would be pertinent. This could highlight the problem with dean needing a more permanent fix and the lack of gulley sucking.

## **Public Participation**

A member of the public asked what the relationship is like between Shepway and Elmsted Parish Council as there is concern over the number of wind turbines erected in Elmsted. The Parish Council explained that there is a government policy for alternative methods of producing electricity should be sought. Cllr Argar read his response to the application for Beech Tree to the Council and it is hoped that this application will not go ahead.

Cllr Burge asked Cllr Carey where the force comes from giving the citizen’s power. Cllr Carey responded that she envisaged rural forums being established but that these would need to accept financial responsibility should an appeal be made against them.

## **Any Other Business**

The Clerk confirmed she had written a note following the death of Mr Browning.

The next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 8.54 PM.