

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
ELMSTED PARISH COUNCIL ON 12th SEPTEMBER 2024 HELD IN EVINGTON HALL**

Present: Cllr Burge (Chair) Cllr P Argar
Cllr Castle Cllr Francesconi
Cllr Stanley

In attendance: 4 members of the public, Cllrs Carey and Martin and the Clerk

Cllr Burge welcomed everyone to the meeting.

		To be actioned by
1.	To receive and approve apologies for absence.	
	Cllrs J Argar, R Wright and District Cllr J Hollingsbee had sent their apologies.	
2.	To receive declarations of interest (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests). The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared.	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2024	
	The minutes were signed as a true record.	
4.	To discuss matters arising from the above minutes not covered by the agenda.	
	There were no matters arising from the minutes that are not covered by the agenda.	
5.	To receive a Report from District/County Councillors	
	<p>District Councillor Jennie Hollingsbee:</p> <p>Rural Prosperity Fund – Some good news for Etchinghill Village Hall who have been awarded £30,000 to build an extension to the village hall and community groups equipment area, freeing up space for installation of a stage and a green room. In addition, both Elaine and I have contributed £500 from our Ward Budget towards new fireproof curtains which have recently been fitted.</p> <p>Annual Canvass – FHDC have just started the annual canvass, a statutory requirement, to ensure the electoral register is up-to-date. Residents will either receive an email about this or – if the council does not have your email address – a paper form through your letterbox. Households should read the instructions carefully as there may not be a need to respond. More information about the process can be found on the council’s website.</p> <p>My Community Voice – (Kent Police local Policing team) Book your Fraud Protect Presentation - The Fraud Prevent and Protect Officer is keen to give presentations to organisations and community groups on how to protect yourselves from the threat of Scams and avoid criminals stealing your money. These can be tailored for the needs and requirements of any group and can be booked for anytime in the future. If you are part of or in charge of any groups, including businesses that would benefit from this input, then please contact Stephen Kelly at the following email address – Stephen.kelly@kent.police.uk</p> <p>Ticket Fraud Many of you may have been unsuccessful in obtaining tickets for next year’s Oasis concerts. It is important now if you are looking online for tickets being sold second hand that you do not end up “looking back in anger” from buying fake Oasis tickets.</p> <p>Criminals will see this as a wonderful opportunity to advertise fake tickets for sale via social media etc. Be vigilant, avoid clicking on suspicious links and only ever use authorised ticket agents to buy tickets. For further information on ticket fraud visit the Action fraud Website - Ticket fraud Action Fraud.</p> <p>Radnor Lodge Tea Room – FHDC is seeking offers from interested parties wanting to take on the Radnor Lodge tearoom in Folkestone. The lease contract allows trading from the tearoom between 9am and 7pm every day and permits the selling of hot (warmed through only) and cold food, non-alcoholic beverages, and ice cream (or any combination of these). For further information contact mhairi.richards@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk</p>	

District Councillor Elaine Martin:

Recycling - F&HDC have launched a new campaign called Raise the Rate which aims to improve the district's current recycling rate of 44.6% by encouraging residents to be extra careful about putting the right things in the correct bins. As part of the campaign an A-Z guide for recycling and waste page has been launched along with details for recycling and waste resources. See F&HDC's website for details

Transport Consultation - A consultation is underway by Kent County Council until October 8th 2024 concerning its statutory Local Transport Plan. All the details of the draft Local Transport Plan and how to respond are on the KCC webpage at www.kent.gov.uk/ltp5. The Local Transport Plan sets out KCC's priorities for transport investment in the county as whole and across the district. The Local Transport Plan will help our council make the case to secure funding for these improvements over time.

Autumn and Winter Well events - The District is facilitating both the Autumn Well Event and the Winter Well Event again this year. The Autumn Well Event is being held on the 20 th September at Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford, Sanford House, Stade Street, Hythe, CT21 6BD between 10am and 1pm. The Winter Well Event is being held on 27th November at South Kent Community Church, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QR between 10am and 1 pm. These events are a one stop shop morning providing advice and help from a range of agencies.

North Downs Forum - At the recent North Downs Forum, the draft of the updated Corporate Plan for 2025 – 2030 was discussed. This enabled people to formulate their thoughts on it ready to respond to the consultation. As a reminder, consultation on the Corporate Plan is open until the 27 th September and it is important that you share your views on it so we can get a cross district view of its contents.

Reach the Beach - "Reach the Beach", the free summer bus service from Folkestone West station to the Harbour Arm, has now ended. It was amazingly successful with a total of 13,683 passengers using the service. Many of these users were visitors to the District boosting tourism in the area.

Otterpool Park - Negotiations are still ongoing to find a strategic partner for the development. Talks with Homes England continue as well as other interested parties. Paula Hirst, who is founder and director of Disruptive Urbanism, was appointed in July as the new Independent Chair of the Otterpool Park LLP board. Disruptive Urbanism is a company set up 11 years ago aiming to bring fresh thinking to how urban development is planned, designed and constructed. A recent briefing was held at Otterpool park for the two new MP's: Sojan Joseph and Tony Vaughan. Both spoke of their excitement and commitment to delivering Otterpool Park which fits precisely into the new Government's Garden Town program.

Rural Prosperity Fund - The Rural Prosperity Fund still has grants available. There is a time limit on the spend where project must be completed by 31st March 2025. Grants have been awarded to a wide range of projects including installation of solar panel system at a cricket club, funding towards building a village hall where one does not currently exist and expansion of wireless broadband network in an area that struggles with reliability and usable speeds. Non-repayable grants of up to £30,000 can be available for qualifying projects. Full details can be found at Rural England Prosperity Fund - Folkestone Works

Annual Canvas - F&HDC are launching their annual canvas in October and November for 2024. This is a legal requirement to make sure the electoral register is accurate and up to date every year. Please check and make sure your details are correct if you are contacted to do so.

County Councillor Susan Carey:

Whilst we must wait till the October budget to see what the new government will fund and what it will not, there has already been one policy announcement about Adult Social Care funding. The government confirmed in Fixing the Foundations that it will not be proceeding with adult social care funding change that would have put a cap on care costs. This reform, which would have combined a cap of £86,000 on lifetime care costs with a more generous means test, was due to be implemented in October 2025. With so many of us living into frail old age, more families are being expected to meet care costs and it's a shame to see this attempt to share the burden more fairly is not going ahead as planned.

Following the Government's decision to restrict the Winter Fuel Payment to those eligible for Pension Credit or other means tested benefits it may be worthwhile to check your eligibility for these. If you aren't

	<p>eligible then you may still find there is support available via KentTogether. You can find KentTogether at www.kent.gov.uk or ring 03000 41 92 92.</p> <p>You may have seen news coverage of the government's consultation for reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system. Housing targets have been raised in Kent to help meet the target of 1.5m homes to be built in the next 5 years (bizarrely the housing target for London has been reduced!) KCC is concerned that the new plans do not mention minerals and waste for which we are responsible nor of the Nature Recovery work that is under way. We do however welcome the proposals to look at transport needs earlier in the process and to look at plans across a region rather than each district being looked at in isolation. Our response to the consultation raises concerns about infrastructure in Kent to support the new housing and questions about how realistic the targets are. In the meantime, if you would like to learn more about Nature Recovery or even take part in one of our workshops do sign up to the newsletter at www.makingspacefornature.org.uk</p> <p>There's a big push to recruit new foster carers here in Kent. Foster carers are paid and receive support; it's a fulfilling role and a vital one. More information on becoming a foster carer can be found on LafosteringSE.org.uk or by calling 0300 131 2797. To give you some idea of the scale of KCC's responsibilities, at the end of March 2024 there were 1,460 children in care from Kent families and an additional 480 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children also in our care.</p> <p>Thank you to those of you who took part in the consultation on KCC's 2025/26 budget. The results of this will help shape where savings are made and what should be prioritised. We are already making some painful changes affecting social care, our children's centres and our discretionary services and we don't expect our financial pressures to ease.</p>	
6.	Public session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item.	
	<p>There is a tree on a telephone wire along the bottom road. This needs reporting.</p> <p>Kingsmill Down potholes need reporting. Clapper Hill is also in a bad state of repair. Cllr Francesconi reported that the dressing surface on many of the roads is washing away, Dean Hill and Wye Hill are both noted as being poor, this should be reported to KHS.</p>	
7.	Financial matters:	
	<p>To note/authorise the following:</p> <p>i. To note the Parish Council's financial position, Chair to initial bank statement. The financial position as at 31st August 2024 was noted and the bank statement initialled.</p> <p>ii. To authorise any payments The Parish Council authorised the payments due.</p>	
8.	To consider any changes to the Risk Assessment.	
	The Parish Council considered any changes to the Risk Assessment. No amendments were necessary.	
9.	Planning matters: to approve the responses to any recent planning applications.	
	<p>Cllr Burge reported that he had been communicating with F&HDC Planning department regarding the expansion of the garage at The Cottage. There has been an issue with the installation of velux windows that were submitted as a change to the application, this has been refused and a full application is required.</p> <p>One velux window has been removed and it would appear that a solar panel is to be installed.</p> <p>An application is to awaited but, a weather-eye will be kept on the changes to this development.</p>	
10.	To acknowledge an expression of interest in buying the Timber Batts from a religious retreat provider.	
	An expression of interest in buying the Timber Batts has been received from a religious group looking to run	

	a religious retreat. No further information is available at this time.	
11.	Any Other Business (for information purposes only):	
	The verges in Maxted Street need to be cut.	
12.	Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.	
	Thursday 12 December 2024 Thursday 13 March 2025 Thursday 8 May 2025	

Signed:

Date: