

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ELMSTED PARISH COUNCIL
ON 14th MAY 2026 HELD IN EVINGTON VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr Stanley (Chair) Cllr J Argar
Cllr P Argar Cllr Castle
Cllr Francesconi Cllr Wright

Cllrs Hollingsbee, Martin, one member of the public and the Clerk.

1.	Election of the Chairman and any Vice-Chairman for the Council year 2026-27
	Deferred until next meeting.
2.	Completion of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form
	Deferred until next meeting.
3.	To receive and approve apologies for absence.
	Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Burge. These apologies were approved.
4.	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 made.
5.	To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2026
	The minutes were signed as a true record.
6.	To discuss matters arising from the above minutes not covered by the agenda.
	Two quotes for arborial work had been received. The tree leans and the roots are undermining the church wall. The tree is also taking up some space as far as parking is concerned. The PC is concerned about the risks the tree is creating. It is also considered unsightly, the majority feel that this presents a risk to the wall and subsidence. RESOLVED: The Clerk will check whether a felling a licence would be required with FHDC. It was noted that the appeal at The Cottage remains undecided.
7.	To receive reports from the County/District Councillors
	Cllrs Hespe, Hollingsbee and Martin had circulated reports ahead of the meeting. Cllr Martin reported that Otterpool had reached agreement with Homes England, this will provide early delivery for Otterpool. KCC have also approved the planning application for the waste treatment plant. FHDC are hoping to hear about the Local Government Reorganisation by the end of July. There has been a grant given to the Sports Centre to refurbish this. The green grants scheme has been reopened for businesses for the district. The North Downs Forum alternates the venues in North Downs East and North Downs West, this takes place every other month. The Ward members grant has been increased. Cllr Hollingsbee reported that the Road of Remembrance is due to reopen in Folkestone. The Saga building has Saga moved back into the building in Folkestone and it is hoped that this will increase employment in the area.
8.	Public Session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item
	Sue Duke introduced herself to the meeting, she was speaking on behalf as the Chair of the Community News. The Community News Committee would like to keep the public aware of what is happening. A wish was

	<p>expressed to interview Councillors and also to note what was decided at meetings etc.</p> <p>Sue Duke asked for a Councillor to volunteer to write something to be published in the magazine after the meetings. The Clerk noted that the minutes are a draft format until the following meeting where they might be altered prior to being ratified.</p>
9.	To confirm eligibility to use the General Power of Competence
	<p>The meeting confirmed that with the Clerk holding a recognised professional qualification (Certificate in Local Council Administration) and the Council meeting the electoral mandate of having at least two-thirds of the council elected, the Parish Council is eligible to use the General Power of Competence. Resolved – that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965. The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, the council adopts the General Power of Competence from 13th May 2026 until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council.</p> <p>The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous).</p>
10.	Appointment and Scope of the Internal Auditor
	<p>The meeting was circulated with the Clerk’s recommendations regarding the Internal Auditor for 2026-27. The Parish Council approved that Mrs Lister should be appointed as the Internal Auditor for 2026-27.</p>
11.	To review the effectiveness of the System of Internal Controls: Councillors are asked to consider the Statement of Internal Control in support of the Annual Governance Statement.
	<p>The Parish Council reviewed and agreed the System of Internal Controls.</p>
12.	Financial matters:
	<p>a) To approve the following financial documents:</p> <p>i. To receive the end of year accounts The Parish Council received and approved the end of year accounts.</p> <p>ii. To confirm that the Council can verify itself as exempt from the “limited assurance review” and complete the Certificate of Exemption. The Parish Council confirmed that it can verify itself as exempt from the limited assurance review and completed the Certificate of Exemption.</p> <p>iii. To receive the report from the Internal Auditor The Parish Council received the report from the Internal Auditor.</p> <p>iv. To approve the Governance Statement 2025/26, section 1 of the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2026 The Parish Council approved the Governance Statement 2025/26, section 1 of the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2026</p> <p>v. To consider and approve the Accounting Statements 2025/26, section 2 of the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2026 and the supporting Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2026, the explanation of significant variance. To ensure that the Accounting Statements 2025/26 are signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting. The Parish Council considered and approved the Accounting Statements 2025/26, section 2 of the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2026 and the supporting Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2026, the explanation of significant variance. The Accounting Statements 2025/26 were signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting.</p> <p>b) i. To note the Parish Council’s financial position for the beginning of the new Financial Year. The Parish Council noted it had £ 8,084.62 in the bank account.</p> <p>ii. To authorise the following payments:</p>

	Clear Council	543.36
	KALC	291.08
	S Lister	30.00
	Tracey Block	1363.92
	HMRC	340.80
	Tracey Block	396.79
	Elmsted and Hastingleigh Joint Asset Management	700.00
	Evington Hall	200.00
	A discussion ensued regarding the remaining CIL monies. There are £4,107.92 to be spent. RESOLVED: To discuss this and research some ideas.	
13.	Review of the Council's: Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, Asset and the Risk Assessment, and confirm arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks; complaints procedure; policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information; data protection legislation (<i>see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21</i>); policy for dealing with the press/media; employment policies and procedures and IT Policy.	
	The Parish Council approved the Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, Asset and the Risk Assessment, and confirm arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks; complaints procedure; policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information; data protection legislation (<i>see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21</i>); policy for dealing with the press/media; employment policies and procedures and IT Policy.	
14.	Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies ie KALC/ACRK	
	The Parish Council approved the Council's subscriptions to KALC. Cllrs decided that the PC would not be interested in crowdfunding for Kent ACRE.	
15.	To consider any changes to the Risk Assessment.	
	The Parish Council considered the Risk Assessment and there were no changes to be made.	
16.	Planning matters: to authorise a response to any application(s) and to note any recent planning decisions by Ashford Borough Council or any correspondence on planning matters	
	Planning newsletter has been published on the FHDC website, please take a look on their website under planning. There is a link in Cllr Hollingsbee's report. The Planning Appeal for The Cottage has not been decided yet.	
17.	Any Other Business (for information purposes only):	
	The "No-through road sign" at Dean has rusted and fallen, this needs to be reported to Kent Highways. Potholes are being reported and many have been painted. Cllr Wright agreed to write something for the Community News.	
18.	Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.	
	Thursday 10 th September 2026 Thursday 11 th March 2027	Thursday 10 th December 2026 Thursday 13 th May 2027

Signed:

Date: