

## Elsenham Parish Council

### Finance Committee Meeting

held on Tuesday 15 December 2020

at 1.30pm via Zoom

#### Present

Mr. P Johnson (Chairman PJ), Mr. P Clear (PEC), Mrs. F Lambert (FL),  
Dr. G Mott (GM), and Mrs. L Johnson (Parish Clerk LJ).

#### Minutes

1. Apologies for absence; None.
2. Declarations of Interest; None.
3. Open to the public; None present.
4. The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2020 were approved.

#### 5. **Budgets for 2021/22**

##### **To agree the precept for 2021/22 for recommendation to Full Council**

The ready reckoner has been received from UDC. Inserting the precept based on the Finance Committees projected budgets for next year would represent a 6% increase.

To reduce the increase, it was agreed to take out the total spend for budgets 215 DWH playground, totalling £2,000. EPC should be receiving a maintenance contribution from DWH of approximately £130,000. Any maintenance on the playground should therefore be taken from these monies and not added to the precept.

Reducing the Outdoor Gym budget was discussed. If budget 4301 Outdoor Gym is reduced to £15,000, this would represent losing one piece of equipment. Or, the gym could be done in stages, with items being added in a future financial year.

However, 4510 Playing Field Reserve has a £6,000 budget which represents unspent monies from this year's budget 4228 Annual Maintenance Groundwork, some of this budget could be used towards the outdoor gym. £1,000 may need to be ring-fenced for a refund to the EYFC, based on the amount of maintenance work that has been carried out on the playing field this year, this would leave £5,000.

It was agreed to reduce budget 4150 Playing Field Reserve from £6,000 to £5,000.

This would make the precept for 2021/22 £82,500 the same amount as this year 2020/21.

It would however still represent a 2.55% increase and a raise, per D household, from £59.20 to £60.71 per year.

It was unclear as to why the same precept as the year before would show an increase. The ready-reckoner calculator shows the tax base, which is based on the number of properties, has been reduced from £1,476.27 to £1,341.02. The reason for this could be that some properties have been put in a lower band. Plus, the Local Tax Support discount has increased from 82.80 to 92.18, this is the number of residents that qualify for a discount which could have increased because of Covid-19.

LJ has asked UDC for an explanation but has not received a reply.

The Finance Committee agreed to propose to Full Council at January's 2021 Parish Council meeting that EPC set a precept for 2021/22 of £82,500.

## **6. Any Other Business**

EPC have still not received a reply from UDC or the police on the pay increase for the PCSO.

LJ to send £2,000 to Henham PC, as a contribution towards the Fairfield appeal.

GM reported on the meeting with Henham and Stansted regarding the PCSO. All parishes were concerned about the amount of time that the PCSO was spending away from the parishes. Stansted PC are drafting a letter to go to the Chief Constable and Fiona Gardner at UDC.

PJ and GM agreed that EPC objections plus the response from Bruce Bamber for the planning application to 50 houses on Land South of Bedwell Road, which is to be submitted to UDC, will be a joint response with Ugley PC. Bruce Bamber is to invoice EPC £450 and Ugley PC £400.

EPC has received an email from Nockolds regarding confirmation of the boundary of the playing field, which had been requested by a resident in Station Road. This subject will be discussed further at another meeting.

Next meeting to be confirmed.

The meeting finished at 2.30pm