

**Minutes of Elmore ANNUAL PARISH MEETING  
held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May at 7 pm 2026  
in Elmore Village Hall**

<b>Present: Parish Councillors: Chair Matt Brandon (MB), Vice Chair Vince Meredith (VM), Mr E Watts (EW), Ms Zahra Sadry (ZS), Mr W Lovell (WL) Dorie Jones (Clerk)</b>	
<b>In Attendance: Mr Trevor Jones</b>	
<b>1. Apologies: Cllr Gill Oxley Cllr Steven Davies</b>	
<b>2. Chair's Annual Statement</b>	
<p>Over the past year, the Parish Council has continued to focus on practical improvements and support for our village community.</p> <p>Among the work carried out this year, the Highways Agency has flushed out the village culverts, which should help improve drainage and reduce surface water issues when the wetter weather returns. We have also organised free defibrillator training courses for residents and arranged for an additional bin to be installed within the village. Alongside these projects, the Council has continued its regular activities, including the upkeep and monitoring of the village defibrillators and responding to day-to-day parish matters.</p> <p>Looking ahead, we are pleased to be developing a new scheme that will allow local groups and residents to apply for one-off funding towards projects or improvements that benefit the village. While the amounts available will be modest, we hope the scheme will provide valuable contributions towards worthwhile local initiatives. Details of how to apply will be made available on the Parish Council website once the scheme is launched.</p> <p>I am also pleased to confirm that the Parish Council were able to continue to offer those services without increasing the precept this year.</p> <p>Finally, if you are interested in becoming involved in parish matters or supporting the work of the Council, please do get in touch, councillor contact details can be found on the final page of this newsletter.</p> <p>Matt Brandon Chairman, Elmore Parish Council</p>	
<b>3. Open Question Time No questions asked.</b>	
<b>4 Declaration of Member's interest in Agenda items. None</b>	
<b>5 Minutes of the Previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b> These were proposed as a true record by VM and seconded by EW.	
<b>6 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b> All items since May 2025 have been covered on standard updates of PC Meetings.	
<b>County Councillors Report Cllr Stephen Davies</b>	
<p><b>Annual Report 2026 – Elmore</b></p> <p>In the last year we have seen the new Liberal Democrat Administration take shape. In reality most activity at the County Council doesn't change with a change in Administration. Adult Social Care and Children's Services don't change much. Although within a month of the Election there was an Ofsted inspection of our Children's Services which was ranked as "Good." This has been a long journey from being previously ranked "Inadequate."</p> <p>There is a tendency for new administrations to re-launch existing activity but with a different name. Where there was previously a "Build Back Better Fund" where your Councillor has money they can invest in Local Good Causes, this has now been re-launched as the</p>	

“Neighbourhood Grassroots Fund.” If you know a local cause that requires support please let me know. To set your expectation, this is a fund of £20k spread over 12 Parishes.

Gloucestershire County Council remains solvent, although the settlement from the Government was less than received in previous years due to changes in the Formula. However, there are no cuts in spending, and the budget had gone up to £690m. The Administration has centralised the Highways Local Budget where your Councillor could choose where to spend the Highways budget on local areas of need. They have centralised the budget and borrowed £15m over 3 years to invest in improved roads. This is useful but nowhere near enough and certainly not enough to “fix the roads” as they promised during last year’s election. They now talk about “managing” public expectations.

The other Policy that the Liberal Democrats have made a lot of noise about is the introduction of 20 mph speed limits. The good news is that they have not gone for the blanket introduction that we have seen in Oxfordshire, but asked Local Communities to make the decision. The bad news is that they have asked Parish Council and Local Communities to express an interest, and this has resulted in nearly 400 expressions of interest. With only £2.8m allocated to this and a backlog in the Traffic Regulation Order process, they risk a “deluge of disappointment.” Hardwicke has been included in Phase 3 and will see some changes in 2028 hopefully.

The progression to creating a Unitary Council continues with the 7 Councils in Gloucestershire working effectively together, they are looking at both options, 1 or 2 Council. The Government will decide in the Summer whether which will have. All the financial business cases, the Governments own criteria and common sense say we should have a single Unitary but recent announcements in Essex and Hampshire raise the possibility that we will have 2, East and West Gloucestershire. This would be illogical and motivated by Political pressure to create a Unitary where Labour might one day win. This would be a disaster. Either way this should lead to Unitary Elections in May 2027.

If you have any questions on any of these topics or any other questions, please don’t hesitate to get in touch at [Stephen.davies2@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:Stephen.davies2@gloucestershire.gov.uk) or on 07802 595 307.

## **8. District Councillors Report Cllr Gill Oxley**

### Local Plan and Spatial Development Strategy Update

The Council has formally commenced work on a new Local Plan following recent approval. Early-stage work is now underway, with the first Gateway review expected in October and initial public consultation planned for late summer 2026. The consultation programme will include informal community engagement activities and “planning for real” events to gather views on:

- Local challenges and constraints
  - Opportunities for future growth
  - Long-term aspirations for the district
- Draft Local Plan Examination Responses to the Planning Inspectors’ questions have now submitted, alongside contributions from Gloucestershire County Council, South Gloucestershire Council and National Highways. While collaboration between the District and County Councils has improved, there remains a key difference of opinion regarding highways evidence:
- The District Council considers sufficient evidence has been provided for the Inspectors to reach conclusions on the plan.
  - The County Council is seeking more detailed highways analysis, which the District Council believes should instead be addressed at planning application stage. The next stage now depends on the Inspectors. Possible outcomes include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further questions being issued</li> <li>• A finding that the plan is unsound</li> <li>• Reopening of hearings (considered less likely) No clear timeline has yet been provided.</li> </ul> <p>Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) There is currently no significant update on the SDS. However, discussions involving Gloucester City Council have identified emerging difficulties in accommodating future development needs within the city boundary. This is likely to lead to further engagement with neighbouring authorities later this year regarding potential cross-boundary housing and growth requirements.</p> <p>Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) There is currently no significant update on the SDS. However, discussions involving Gloucester City Council have identified emerging difficulties in accommodating future development needs within the city boundary. This is likely to lead to further engagement with neighbouring authorities later this year regarding potential cross-boundary housing and growth requirements.</p>	
<p><b>9 Finance:</b> DJ emailed the spreadsheet information to the Council and published them on the website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) <b>Review of Parish Precept 2025/2026/27/28</b> The Parish Precept is unchanged at £2,472.00 There may be plans to change for the following financial year. It was suggested that Matt would be asked to check with other local parishes what their plans may be.</li> <li>ii) <b>Account and Audit 2025/2026</b> Following our internal Audit, this work is complete and ready for the Council to approve.</li> <li>iii) <b>Forecast Expenditure 2026/2027.</b> The forecast of expenditure remains roughly the same as for the previous Financial Year although there could be a further increase in Verge Cutting Costs.</li> <li>iv) <b>Community Based projects.</b> Applications for Community Based Projects.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>10. Severn Voice Meeting Report</b> No new meetings to report from. Uplift in Verge Cutting costs were agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p><b>11 Highways</b> <i>Fix My Street / Road</i> should be used to report Potholes on adopted highways. Everyone is encouraged to report all potholes. Highways would be asked to take a look at Lake Street. VM reported culvert cleaning had been done by Highways</p>	<b>VM</b>
<p><b>12 Defibrillator Management</b> ZS reported both defibrillators were working. There was discussion about how to improve the location of the Elmore Back defibrillator to prevent dampness affecting the cabinet. Cllrs agreed to follow up several ideas. Discussion about whether the defibrillators need to be locked at all. Other parishes do not lock theirs.</p>	<b>ZS</b>
<p><b>13 Planning Update</b> No new planning updates. All issues since May 2025 appear to be settled, including Barhouse Farm, Hollow Farm, Stables/Common Room, Lake Street Cottage. The Parish Council was listened to by Stroud Planners except with Stables/Common Room.</p>	<b>EW</b>

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<p><b>14 External Services</b> WL agreed to work with Grit Bines with other items.</p>	
<p><b>15 Data</b> Matt will work with the Councillors who need to establish access the Google Drive New email addresses will be added.</p>	<b>MB</b>
<p><b>16 Assets</b> <b>Defibrillator Training.</b> Discussed following up payment to St John’s trainers. Also if there is demand for further follow up training sessions. EW suggested we might combine with other parishes. <b>Notice Boards</b> The Village Hall Board is a bit shaky. Cllrs agreed to look at the options to improve it. Discussed whether we needed more than one notice board in the village.  <b>War Memorial</b> – nothing to report.</p>	<b>ZC</b>
<p><b>17 Parish Communications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Website:</b> Kept up to date. Moving towards a gov.uk website.</li> <li>• <b>Parish Council email:</b> Changed to clerk@elmoreparish.gov.uk</li>   <li>• <b>The Bridge:</b> The 46<sup>th</sup> Edition of The Bridge is due to come out at the end of May. Trevor Jones is continuing to edit this. Our thanks given to our willing volunteers to deliver to our doors.</li>   <li>• <b>Email:</b> Addresses given to the Chairman to hold are kept strictly confidential to comply with Data Regulations Guidance.</li> </ul>	<b>DJ</b>  <b>TJ</b>
<p><b>18 Special Projects</b> WL agreed to work on the Applications for local funding for projects.</p>	<b>WL</b>
<p><b>19 Any Other Business</b></p>	
<p><b>Date of the Next Annual Parish Meeting</b> – Date to be arranged in May 2027</p>	
<p>The Chairman thanked those present for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8 pm.</p>	