

**Minutes of Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023**  
**Elmstead Parish Council – New Community Centre Committee**  
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

**Present:** Mr P Beard (Chairman), Mrs C Brock, Mr R Fairweather, Cllr Adam Gladwin, Cllr M Hare, Mr S Higgins, Mrs L Scott, Mrs D Stammers, Mrs J Triscott, Cllr Martine Ward and Mr S Wright.

**Also present:** Mrs Baxter (clerk).

**Not present:** Mrs J Grotier, and Mrs R Valentine.

**23/056 Chairman’s welcome**

Mr Beard thanked everyone for coming.

**23/057 Apologies of Absence**

Apologies were received from Mrs Grotier and for Mrs Valentine.

**23/058 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests**

None.

**23/059 Approval and signing of the minutes from the meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023.**

It was resolved to accept the minutes from the meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023 as true and accurate.

Proposed: Cllr Beard, Seconded: Cllr Ward, 10 in favour, 1 abstention.

**23/060 Public Speaking**

None.

**23/061 A report on any updates since the last Committee meeting to include if relevant:**

*i) The status of the Charity Field development.*

Mr Fairweather reported that a local developer had been in touch for an update and expressed concerns, including with the legal planning documents. Mr Fairweather, Mrs Triscott, Cllr Gladwin and Mrs Baxter met with him and went through his concerns, some of it was historical mistakes that were made. He advised us to be careful and get our solicitor involved. Mrs Triscott reported that there is an inaccuracy in some documentation that says that the new community centre has already been built. Cllr Gladwin added that he took away from the meeting that there isn’t anything that we can do now. There was a discussion around whether there is anything we can do to safeguard the developer contributions. We’ll ask our solicitor.

Mrs Triscott advised that the developer thought there was no risk of us losing the land because of the approved planning.

Mr Beard went through some of the points raised.

The clerk has asked Go Homes if we can have the copyright of the plans for the original planning application can be signed over to us. We are waiting for a response.

Mr Beard thanked those involved in setting up the meeting, it was good of the developer to give us his time.

Mr Fairweather reported that the trees have gone in. They don’t look as big as expected. They have planted and staked them.

We haven’t heard anything on the turfing of the land. There’s no point now as by the times the land dries out it will be frosty.

*ii) The status of the Church Road development.*

TDC has told us that 19 houses are occupied with the developer anticipating that the 20<sup>th</sup> will take place by Christmas. We also understand that 7 additional houses have been sold and are in various stages of completion. The developer will need to pay their contribution before the 21<sup>st</sup> is occupied so this is encouraging.

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The clerk is to ask the developer what his plans for making the contribution are. It was discussed what else needs to happen after the Church Road payment is made for the Charity Field payment to be made. Does a reserved matters application need to be made now that the original planning has expired? Does it matter that the build agreement is with a company that doesn't exist now? Mr Beard said they previously checked this with TDC planning and the obligation moves to the new company.

**23/062 New Community Centre/car park land and Open Space land**

*i) An update on the land transfers.*

The clerk has not received an update from Ellison's. She will continue to follow up. His previous contact said that when he gets the paperwork he needs from Go Homes' solicitor he will contact us to go through it.

*ii) To discuss the drainage situation.*

Pauls Crescent residents have been in communication with TDC about their gardens flooding because of run off from the field. Go Homes has now dug a trench at that end and filled it with gravel as a soakaway. The ditch along the side of the road is full of water and there is water on the field. The ditch doesn't go anywhere, it doesn't connect to the soakaway at this end, which is also full. There is a pond on the far side of the houses. The concern is that if the field is that wet now with not a lot of rain we won't be able to use it. Are there supposed to be land drains in the field? There was a discussion about who to contact. It will be an issue for the Parish Council if the land is transferred with a drainage problem.

Cllr Gladwin reported that one of the outstanding conditions when we met with Mr Pateman-Gee was surface water drainage. The trench won't be a permanent solution.

It was resolved to contact TDC about the issue. Cllr Gladwin will put the wording together for that.

Proposed: Mr Beard, Seconded: Mr Fairweather, all in favour.

*iii) To discuss the boundary.*

It has been suggested that there is a wayleave at the end of the field, Cllr Scott believes that there's a strip of land that belongs to someone else because of a utility. We haven't seen any sign that it isn't all owned by Go Homes though. A fence has been put up in the corner that is encroaching onto the field. It will need to be Go Homes as the landowner that enforces it.

The clerk is to ask Go Homes for updated photos.

**23/063 Planning permission**

*To discuss steps to take towards applying for reserved matters planning permission for the community centre.*

It could take 6 months – 1 year to go through planning. It might not be so long as it will be a reserved matters application.

We asked Go Homes if they can share their plans with us, and if they can sign over the copyright. Mr Hammond said he would find out and get back to me.

We could take our version of the plans to an architect and ask them to update them for the roof. Some members weren't keen because of the cost, and would rather put the same application in, if we can get the drawings. Would we then be able to do an amendment for the roof? The only drawings for the planning are the floor plan and side elevations.

It was suggested that we ask a draughtsman to draw updated plans.

The original plan was for a timber framed building which might change with a different builder. Other builders don't build in that way, it's more a traditional bricks and mortar. We've chosen an Essex barn style to complement the village.

We could ask TDC about the best way to proceed, and whether we will be able to make amendments to our reserved matters application.

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The new building will need to come under new regulations for heating, efficiency etc. We might need to make more significant changes than we are expecting.

It was suggested that we get a professional to do the planning application to be as close to the Go Homes application as possible but within current regulations. So, we get the planning approved and then take that to different builders. If they have in house architects, they can take a look at suggested changes and do the planning amendment applications. This won't need all the technical drawings so won't cost as much as the previous architect quotes. Cllr Gladwin looked at previous architect quotes and we were given an estimate of £3,000 to explore a planning redesign if required and £1,920 to discharge conditions. For this they would visit the site, consider site approvals to date, discuss requirements for adaptation, prepare sketch overlays for discussion and report to client, advise client on additional planning applications and services required. This doesn't include materials etc. It would be £480 to collate and submit the application.

It was asked why we don't wait until the land is transferred before we make the planning application. The deed of variation says that once the Church Road trigger is met then a reserved matters application needs to be approved which then starts the three months and 10 days period to receive the funds from Go Homes. We're not sure how this works given we have an expired full planning approval. The committee looked at the deed of variation Schedule 4 paragraphs 2.1 to 2.3. There was a discussion on various strategies of how to proceed.

It was resolved to ask the council to put out a tender to see what it would cost to get the planning application drawings done and start the application process. Also, to check with TDC to see if we will need to wait again for reserved matters, ask about the best way to proceed and chase Go Homes for the plans.

Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Mr Fairweather, all in favour.

**23/064 Matters raised for the next agenda or for information only.**

Mr Beard read the Upmarket article about the current community centre and the Neighbourhood Development Order. We have previously said that before a decision was made about the current community centre we would consider the new community centre and whether it would need topping up. The article makes it sound as if the decision has been made.

Mr Gladwin responded that the NDO does not commit us to anything, and we can't do anything with the community centre until the new community centre is built.

**23/065 Date of next committee meeting**

14<sup>th</sup> December 2023, subject to whether it's needed.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

**Minuted by Mrs A Baxter**

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