

**Minutes of Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024**  
**Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council**  
**Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET**

Present: Cllrs Adam Gladwin (Chairman), Amanda Brennan, James Chable, Michael Hare, Maxine Jeggo, Liz Richfield and Martine Ward.

Also Present: Mrs Baxter and two members of public (including Cllr Alan Goggins).

District Councillor Ann Wiggins

Absent: Cllrs Sarah Donaldson and Gill Williams.

**24/204 Chairman's welcome and notifications.**

Cllr Gladwin welcomed everybody.

**24/205 Apologies for Absence.**

Cllrs Sarah Donaldson and Gill Williams sent their apologies. District Councillor Gary Scot and County Councillor Carlo Guglielmi also send their apologies.

**24/206 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests.**

None.

**24/207 Approval and signing of the minutes from 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024.**

It was resolved to accept the minutes from 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024 as true and accurate.

Proposed: Cllr Chable, Seconded: Cllr Hare, all in favour.

**24/208 To receive an update about the progress of resolutions from the meeting above not covered in this agenda.**

The clerk updated that an e-mail was sent to the headteacher at Market Field School about teachers and parents parking in the Community Centre car park. The headteacher is going to support us in trying to stop parking there and has asked for number plates so that she can follow up if people do park there.

The clerk has checked the forms that Reed Hall Sentinels sent to the council in order for them to get a grant. The forms are for an agreement between the owner of the field and the club though so it's not something we can complete. The clerk will get in touch with the Football Association to see if the agreement can be adjusted. There wasn't anywhere that said a 5 year lease is required, it's more of a commitment for field improvement for the next 10 years. To go on the next agenda.

It was raised that there was a team playing on the field on a Wednesday evening and Cllr Chable was asked why they can't play on there. He responded that a kick around is fine, but playing proper football in boots causes wear and tear to the field. Cllr Chable let them know that they would need to ask the Parish Council for permission. They won't be playing again until the nights start getting longer.

The clerk asked Cllr Guglielmi for an update on the crossing. Cllr Guglielmi has not been well and asked Cllr Goggin to attend to update us. Cllr Goggin was at the last LHP meeting with Cllr Guglielmi.

Cllr Goggin passed on information from Cllr Guglielmi that the £40k that was initially for bus stop improvements, that we thought had been reassigned for the crossing, has not been changed and the money is sitting in transport and they won't give it up. Cllr Guglielmi brought Mr Guiver in for a meeting and they are on the case. Cllr Guglielmi was led to believe that a deed of variation had been made to use the £40k for the crossing and is very annoyed that it wasn't.

Cllrs expressed their shock and disappointment.

We sent a letter to Mr T Blackburn-Maze about the crossing but have not had a response.

Cllr Goggin suggested sending following up on the letter with Mr T Cunningham who is the portfolio holder.

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The clerk will follow this up and include Cllr Guglielmi and will send Cllr Guglielmi the wording for what the £40k is specifically earmarked for in the original s106 agreement. Cllr Goggin is finance director of the Hope Academy and was a governor of Market Field School. The School is trying to get their surplus staff parking in the Clacton Road car park and they are going to run a shuttle bus between there and the school. Cllr Gladwin thanked Cllr Goggin for attending at short notice.

**24/209 Public Speaking**

No public speaking.

**24/210 County Councillor report. To include where relevant an update on items in progress.**

Cllr Goggin spoke about devolution. County Councils were asked a few years ago if they were interested. Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex County Councils all bid. Norfolk and Suffolk were approved but not Essex, as the level of money it wanted to take over on what was being devolved was huge. With the change of government it has now said no to Norfolk and Suffolk and has asked to meet Essex as it has more realistic plan.

**24/211 District Councillor reports. Written report – to take questions on the report and provide any additional information not on the report.**

Cllr Wiggins added to the written report that they have been asked about double yellow lines on Church Road. The parking there is terrible, and people are parking on the kerb so that people can't walk past. Cllr Scott met police officers who are doing random speed checks at the entrance to Asterwood on School Road. Following on from the Garden Community meeting Cllrs Scott and Wiggins had a meeting with Mr Guiver at the Town Hall. They were told that there is no specific number of houses that have to be built before the second phase of the link road is started. The road is still going ahead. The rapid transport system is now called the fast transport system. Mr Guiver is having meetings with health people with a focus on prevention rather than cure.

**24/212 New Community Centre and Open Space land.**

*i) Any updates?*

The planning application has been in for a while, there are no public comments yet, and the statutory body's comments are either no comment or neutral. Highways recognises that the application is basically the same as for the previous application and has no concerns. Hopefully we'll have planning permission by the next meeting.

We have not had an update from our solicitor, but information has been e-mailed to him.

*ii) Would the council prefer to take the land without incursions?*

This was a recommendation from our solicitor. This would make things easier for the council.

After a discussion it was resolved that the council wished to take the land with the incursions.

Proposed: Cllr Hare, Seconded: Cllr Gladwin, all in favour.

Cllr Gladwin asked everyone to keep an eye on whether there are any patches of flooding on the field.

**24/213 Neighbourhood Plan**

*An update.*

We had a great turnout at the referendum with a 93% vote in favour. This is going to the TDC cabinet meeting on the 18th October for adoption.

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Cllr Hare added that the government is increasing the number of houses that have to be built every year.

**24/214 Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community**

i) *An update from the Joint Committee meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024.*

Cllr Gladwin attended this meeting, Cllrs Scott and Wiggins were also there. The meeting was held at 6pm instead of 8pm because the road was closing at 8pm. There were some members who needed to leave by 8 and it felt like the meeting was rushed. There were 2 items on the agenda. One was to approve the modifications the Planning Inspector suggested for the DPD. This had to be done legally anyway within a period of time. The other item was to give more delegated powers to officers so that the committee meets less often and makes less decisions, but the last time the committee met was 11 months ago so should be meeting more often, not less often. It doesn't give people the chance to speak publicly, we've only had 5 minutes in a year to comment on this publicly and it feels like Elmstead is vastly under-represented. Cllr Gladwin asked about the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the link road and they confirmed that they don't know who is going to build it, when it's going to be built and how much it's going to cost. In the evidence base there is a document which says that the link road is attached to Phase one which is 1,750 houses but we don't know if that's legally binding. There is so much information now that the concern is no one person is in full grasp of the situation. With the delegation to the 3 officers (one from each council) there is no oversight from the joint committee anymore. There was a Tendring member who admitted that he had not read the full report and said that he was not a planner but still voted (and in fact proposed). It doesn't seem right. It's an 8 member committee which was almost not quorate. 3 of the regular members weren't there and substitutes were sent. There seems to be a sub-committee/steering group where matters are being discussed out of the public forum. It was resolved to complain about the committee to democratic services officers for Tendring and Colchester. Cllr Gladwin has notes and will work with the clerk on the complaint.

Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded Cllr Ward, all in favour.

Cllr Goggins raised that substitutes might not be able to vote. It would be a reasonable question to check that the meeting was quorate, and to check who substituted and were they trained and established.

Cllr Gladwin shared that a Tendring substitute did not say anything throughout the whole meeting.

It was asked about delegation, and the way that the committee has delegated powers to officers. Would members be able to call in decisions to the committee if they were concerned? Committee members were told that there was no mechanism to do this. Cllr Gladwin queried the committee about the hedges being cut down during bird nesting season. They responded that they had an ecologist there watching what happened and therefore it wasn't illegal.

ii) *To consider a response to the Consultation on Modifications to the Development Plan Document (DPD).*

Cllr Gladwin has been working on a response. If anyone else has any comments on the modifications let Cllr Gladwin know.

It was resolved to delegate authority to the clerk to submit the response once it has been finalised.

Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

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*iii) To consider a press release regarding the Garden Community.*

There has been a lot of information in the Gazette and some voices are getting heard. We aren't getting heard fairly. We need to be able to be more dynamic on being able to make statements in a timely manner.

It was resolved for Cllr Gladwin to put together a press release and circulate it and to delegate authority to the clerk to send it out.

Cllr Brennan added that we should be going out to bigger press too.

Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Ward, all in favour.

**24/215 Press Releases**

*To review the media and press policy to discuss if any changes are required in order for press releases to be made in between council meetings and what the requirements should be for those.*

It was resolved that if we want to put out any press release it will be circulated and then authority delegated to the clerk to put that release out.

Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

The clerk added that our current policy supports that resolution but will add some wording to make the process clear.

Cllr Goggin left.

**24/216 Tree works**

*An update on quotes requested. To decide on a contractor if all quotes received. To consider delegating the decision to the Finance Committee if not.*

The clerk has only received one quote so far.

It was resolved to delegate the decision to the Finance Committee who will be meeting soon to review the second quarter expenditure.

Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

**24/217 Allotments**

*Any updates?*

The clerk has made the application to TDC to be able to use the £4,506 available open spaces s106 funds for the allotments and has been advised that this can be used for fencing, gates, locks and keys, a water supply, possible standpipe and troughs, and landscaping for the plots and walkways. It can't be used for the services of a professional landscape designer. TDC did say the application will take quite a while to process.

The clerk also checked if we could use s106 funds for the path between Elmcroft and the allotments. We don't have any other open spaces funds though so would need to do a deed of variation on another s106 fund, but we couldn't pay for the DOV out of the funds. The clerk listed some options in a report. There is a Lanswood s106 fund for about £4,000.

It was resolved for the clerk to ask Lanswood if they would be in favour of making that change to their contribution and if so to start the process.

Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Gladwin, all in favour.

The clerk read through the rest of the allotments report. The clerk has queried the allotments work specification with TDC.

The clerk suggested the working party visits new small allotments in Alresford to see if we can fit more smaller allotments on our site. The current plan only shows 4 plots of approximately 24m x 10m.

The clerk has asked TDC if the parking spaces are just for residents or for allotments too. The transfer document says that the management company can make additional restrictions on the parking and so the clerk will try and find out more.

Signature .....

Date .....

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A member of public (Pavilion View resident) updated that the management company has appointed Boyden's. There may be issues with the parking bays as there aren't many visitor spaces, and so there may need to be some restrictions there to stop casual parking. Boyden's has suggested visitor passes and a parking enforcement company. The clerk is trying to find out if the landscaping plan can be changed. There are questions we need to ask Mr Newell when we meet him. His solicitor has offered to answer any questions we have on the transfer and do the paperwork. Our solicitor has disappeared. If we have to find another solicitor it will take additional time. The clerk is to try and call again.

The clerk asked if the council wished to start getting quotes for works such as the fencing. As quotes will only be relevant for a short period it was decided to wait until closer to transfer.

The clerk reported that she attended a webinar run by the National Allotment Society. Their legal advisor verbally advised that Elmstead Primary School can take one or two allotments. The council was happy with this verbal advice, which is recorded.

It was discussed that it will be one or two depending on how big the plots are and how much interest there is in the other plots. The legal advisor suggested, to make it fair, that we advertise that the plots are coming up and give a date after which we'll be taking expressions of interest. Then take them on a first come first served basis.

**24/218 Planning**

- i) *An update from the planning committee meeting held on 30th September 2024.*

Cllr Gladwin updated that there were two applications. One was for commercial units behind Whittings. There was very little information. We are objecting on the lack of information.

The other application was from Hills on the land that they previously got permission for offices. It's for 13 houses. Hills have been told by TDC that it's not possible for them to contribute to the New Community Centre instead of providing affordable housing. The application meets our Neighbourhood Plan policies, and so the committee decided not to make a comment at this time.

- ii) *An update on the options for the legal agreement for the Hills development.*

Cllr Guglielmi is trying to set up a meeting for us with Mr Guiver to discuss the contribution. We'll wait until we have information on that before deciding on a comment for the application.

**24/219 Signage on South Green**

*To consider feedback received on South Green signage.*

A member of public has complained about business flags on the green being excessive and obstructing drivers' views. The council can't enforce the removal of the flags and councillors commented that they couldn't see a problem, including those that have driven onto the roads and businesses on the green.

**24/220 Events.**

- i) *The social hub.*

Cllr Ward reported that it continues to be well attended. One of the church volunteers thinks that there are some younger people in the village who could benefit, can we publicise that it's not just for older people?

The clerk asked if the reporting form for the hub grant funding has been submitted. Cllr Donaldson was doing it but she wasn't present at the meeting. Cllr Richfield will contact her.

Signature .....

Date .....



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*ii) Halloween.*

Cllr Jeggo reported that the events working party has met to make arrangements. The Halloween plans are on track. There will be another meeting before the event. Cllr Gladwin is trying to fix the A frame, if it will be needed.

*iii) Christmas.*

Santa has been confirmed, we have an elf, stalls and lights for the green. We have found a cheaper supplier for the Christmas tree on the green.

**24/221 TDALC Meeting**

*A report from the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024.*

Cllr Hare reported that the government has told TDC it has to build 1,049 houses per year. This will cause a lot of problems, it will be very hard to refuse permission.

Cllr Ward reported that Elmstead PC were congratulated on having a Neighbourhood Plan.

Essex Highways are no longer funding any VAS signs.

**24/222 Wooden Seats**

*The council has 3 wooden seats in storage, two that were ear marked for the New Community Centre and one for Church Road. To discuss other options for the benches as they need to be removed from storage. Suggested options are the allotments, the bus stop on Colchester Road and to replace the two metal benches on South Green.*

It was resolved to install one seat on Church Road near Pavilion View and one by the bus stop on Colchester Road near the entrance to Oatlands. Cllr Gladwin will help Mr Dingwall.

Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Chable, all in favour.

The bench by the bus shelter on North Green was also suggested as the slats have started to warp. However we could look at fixing it as it has a metal frame which will last. Mr Dingwall doesn't think the metal benches on South Green need replacing, just a bit of maintenance.

**24/223 Finance.**

*i) To look through the finance report and approve payments. See appendix 1.*

The finance report was approved after some questions and answers. Proposed: Cllr Hare, Seconded: Cllr Chable, all in favour.

The clerk reported that the precept has been received but it was paid into our new community centre account, not our current account, so it will need to be transferred.

*ii) An update on banking (accounts and deposits).*

The clerk went through the balances in each account.

*iii) To consider an increase to the Remembrance Day budget (to be funded by the general reserve).*

The clerk reported that the budget was set at £322.50 however the volunteers have told us that the wreaths are going to cost £280 this year. With the refreshments, flowers and crosses the budget won't cover it. It looks as if wreath costs have gone up 50% but looking at the online costs for the Royal British Legion they look the same.

It was asked why the council is buying so many wreaths. Last year it was 8 wreaths. It could be that the volunteers are buying more wreaths. They are being purchased for other organisations but it was questioned why they don't buy their own. We also don't know how many crosses are being purchased.

If we are going to make a change to what we reimburse for we'll need to do that from next year.

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It was resolved that we purchase the same number of wreaths as last year and increase the refreshments to £100. If there is any additional expenditure to approve the chair and clerk can deal with it.

Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Hare, all in favour.

**24/224 Committee Membership**

*To consider new members for:*

*i) The Planning Committee.*

It was resolved for Cllr Richfield to join the planning committee. Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Gladwin, all in favour.

*ii) The Finance Committee.*

It was resolved to add Cllr Gladwin to the finance committee. Proposed: Cllr Ward, Seconded: Cllr Chable, all in favour.

*iii) The Personnel Committee.*

It was resolved to add Cllr Richfield to the Personnel Committee. Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Ward, all in favour.

**24/225 Items for the next agenda or for information only.**

Cllr Brennan shared that Cllr Gladwin received his award this week for EALC's young councillor of the year. The council is very proud of him.

Cllr Ward asked for vandalism to be added as we have had several instances recently.

The clerk has found a TDC anti-social behaviour control officer's details from a few years ago. We could make contact.

**24/226 Next meeting.**

*7<sup>th</sup> November 2024*

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

There being no further public business councillors were thanked for their attendance.

Minutes written by Mrs. A Baxter