

Minutes of Meeting on 5th December 2024
Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Present: Cllrs Adam Gladwin (Chairman), Amanda Brennan, Michael Hare, Tony Sanders and Martine Ward.

Also Present: Mrs Baxter (clerk) and 3 members of public (including Cllr Alan Goggins).

District Councillors Gary Scott and Ann Wiggins.

Absent: Cllrs James Chable, Sarah Donaldson, Maxine Jeggo, Liz Richfield and Gill Williams.

24/250 Chairman's welcome and notifications.

Cllr Gladwin welcomed everyone.

24/251 Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Chable, Donaldson, Jeggo, Richfield and Williams.

Apologies were also received from County Councillor Carlo Guglielmi.

24/252 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests.

None.

24/253 Approval and signing of the minutes from 7th November 2024.

It was resolved to accept the minutes from 7th November 2024 as true and accurate with the below changes.

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

Item 24/232 to change it to "The handyman and Cllr Gladwin installed the two wooden seats on Church Road..."

Item 24/236(ii) last line to add "Proposed Cllr Gladwin".

Items 24/237 to change "true " to "accurate".

24/254 To receive an update about the progress of resolutions from the meeting above not covered in this agenda.

The clerk updated that CJ Wynn has been instructed to do the tree works arising from the tree survey.

Reed Hall Sentinels have been told that the council did not give permission for the Heras fencing.

24/255 Public Speaking

None.

24/256 County Councillor report. To include where relevant an update on items in progress.

Cllr Goggin reported that Cllr Guglielmi's health is improving.

There's a Local Highways Panel meeting tomorrow. The crossing is on the agenda.

Cllr Gladwin reported a concern to Cllr Goggin about different roadworks being done at the same time, causing chaos locally. The long stretch of no breakdown cover on the A133 is also causing issues.

Cllr Goggin explained about the members' initiative team for potholes. There is £12 million of funding available. Essex County Councillors get one week's use of a small works team to fix potholes and other defects. Cllr Goggin requested a list of priorities for the Parish by e-mail for the next PC meeting.

Cllr Goggin spoke about devolution being a Labour priority. Unitary Councils are set up to replace councils at the County and District level and reduce bureaucracy. ECC and TDC will be replaced by a Unitary Council. The current favoured option is Tendring, Colchester, Braintree and possibly Uttlesford. The next Essex elections are in May 25, they may not happen. A whitepaper on is due to be delivered on the 18th December. Cllr Ward asked if School Road could have national cycle route signage as she has seen a vehicle nearly hit

Minutes of Meeting on 5th December 2024
Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

a bicycle. Cllr Goggin responded that a lot of the Essex route is country lanes with no signage.

24/257 District Councillor reports. Written report – to take questions on the report and provide any additional information not on the report.

Cllr Scott also spoke about devolution. In 2026 there will be a shadow Local Authority ready for the transfer in 2027. The total number of councillors will be reduced. There will need to be a council chamber location, geographically Colchester makes sense.

Cllr Scott will let us know in January if the May elections are going ahead. If they do they will be for 2 years.

Cllr Scott made a site visit to the park on Old School Lane to discuss improvements to be made with s106 funding.

Cllr Hare added that s106 contributions are being discussed at TDALC as they are too specific with a limited spend.

24/258 New Community Centre and Open Space land.

i) Land transfer update.

Cllr Gladwin shared the good news that we have heard from our solicitor who has sent us the final copy of the transfer documents. We need to meet with our solicitor to go through our queries and sign the documents. There are 2 separate transfers, for the community centre land and the open space land. We need to ensure that the encroachment areas are included in the land to be transferred.

ii) Any other updates?

TDC has received the £400k s106 contribution from Go Homes. The clerk has provided our bank details for the funds to be transferred to us.

iii) To consider the costs for the required deed of variation.

Now that TDC has the money and we are close to getting the land we're not sure if we still need the variation to the deed. TDC has confirmed in writing to Go Homes that "in line with Schedule 4, Paragraph 3.2 the Owners liabilities and obligations to contribute towards and construct the Community Centre have now ceased in their entirety." We'll ask our solicitor.

iv) What steps can be taken before the council receives the land and s106 contribution?

Cllr Gladwin and Mrs Baxter met with the quantity surveyor that our architect provided a costing for, for the next stage up to tender. In his quote he included a cost of £1,250 for a pre-tender estimate of the project cost. This would provide a base line, and we could then use the information to make decisions about the project and better understand how much additional funding is required.

It was resolved to appoint the QS to do the pre-estimate work for £1,250.

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

v) To consider a change to the terms of reference for the committee to reduce the quorum.

There are occasional issues with being quorate, the current quorum is 6 but the legal minimum is 3. It would reduce the risk of the committee being unable to meet and make recommendations to council.

It was resolved to reduce the quorum to 5. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

24/259 Colchester Road crossing

Any updates?

Cllr Gladwin reported we have received an update from Cllr Guglielmi. There is a Local Highways Panel meeting tomorrow but it seems hopeful that there is a budget available to

Minutes of Meeting on 5th December 2024
Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

pay for the remainder of the crossing without the need for the £40k bus shelter contribution that was going to be redirected by deed of variation to the crossing.

We'll hear back after the LHP meeting.

Cllr Goggin left the meeting.

24/260 Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community

i) Any updates?

Since the last PC meeting there has been a roundtable meeting with community groups and Sir Bernard Jenkin and we successfully lobbied Sir Bernard to make a press statement about not attending the launch of the link road, as it is not a complete road. It was a productive meeting with attendees being in agreement. Sir Bernard agreed with the "road first" premise.

Going forwards we need to see how we are going to work together with multiple groups. Cllr Brennan added that we need to meet again and decide on some actions and start fighting back.

It was suggested that we send an invite and meet early in the new year. We need to decide on some specific goals. The working party could discuss this first.

Cllr Wiggins and Scott didn't attend the launch either and were thanked for ensuring that the council was invited.

ii) The third round of public consultation on the Garden Community by Latimer.

Deadline 16th December 2024. The online consultation is at

<https://www.latimer.community/feedback> Does the council wish to respond?

Cllrs who attended the public consultation reported that attendees were angry and a lot of people were writing notes. There was one representative there saying that the road would be completed first, so was ill informed. The plans looked like a concrete jungle. There was hardly anyone who knew what they were talking about.

Cllr Gladwin will draft a council response to the consultation to share and be submitted.

We can then publish our response. It will focus on infrastructure first, the link road and the gap. Latimer proposes to put a solar farm in the gap.

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

iii) TCBGC Pathway to Stewardship: Presentation to Stakeholders on Stewardship Framework and Recommendations to be held 6th December.

We don't know what to expect from this. Our District Councillors were not invited. The clerk will send the details.

24/261 Allotments

i) Any updates?

Newell's solicitor has written to the solicitor we instructed to inform them that if they don't get a response by 13th December they will send the transfer papers directly to us. In that case they will be dis-instructed. The clerk is going to get back to the Newell's solicitor over queries we have raised and additional queries from Cllr Sander's review of the transfer documents.

ii) To consider the purchase of a standpipe to prevent frost damage over winter.

It was raised that it's not our responsibility whilst it's not our land. It was suggested that we leave it until we get control of the land. It will need a better standpipe though and to be moved to a better location. The clerk is to send the allotment details to Cllr Sanders to draft a layout for a mix of sizes and a communal area with some sheds.

24/262 Reed Hall Sentinels

To consider costs for Essex County Council and Lambert Smith Hampton to produce an additional shared user agreement to cover the use of the field by RHS.

Minutes of Meeting on 5th December 2024
Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

The fees for doing an additional agreement are £720 (LSH) and approximately £1,000 (Essex Legal Services). They would be able to do a 5 or 10 year agreement with a flexible break clause. There would be no need to renew annually.

It was agreed to request a 5 year agreement and increase the RHS annual fees to £2,100 from 2025/26 as they have not been increased since 2021/22. We'll also include an index linked annual increase in the agreement.

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

We will need to ensure we keep on top of other teams not using the pitches.

24/263 Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings

Does council wish to respond to this consultation – deadline 19th December 2024?

It was discussed that technology could make this difficult. That the survey is not yes or no, there are options for what limitations could apply to remote attendance. With differing opinions it was decided for councillors to respond individually.

24/264 Events.

i) *The social hub.*

Cllr Ward reported that the Christmas party is next week. Cllr Donaldson will do the grant application.

ii) *Christmas.*

Cllr Brennan reported that it went well and they had good feedback. They will do a shorter event next year though and make sure it isn't on the same date as the Alresford event.

24/265 Finance.

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

The finance report was approved. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

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

Council reviewed the balances in the accounts.

iii) *To consider a grant application regarding a community event.*

It was resolved not to approve the grant because it was outside of the grant application process. Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Sanders, all in favour.

24/266 Planning

A report from the planning committee meeting held on 12th November 2024.

The committee objected to an application for commercial units at Whiting's because of the location of the access road.

The committee objected to an application for 6 self-builds on Church Road because it did not comply with several Neighbourhood Plan policies. Cllr Scott has called the application in if officers are minded to approve it.

24/267 Tendring District Association of Local Councils

A report from the TDALC meeting held on 27th November 2024.

It was said at that meeting that we should be able to contact TDC on their telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.

TDC wants local councils to take responsibility for grass cutting. We already cut Lucerne Green which is TDC's. There was a question about which verges we cut on behalf of Essex County Council. Cllr Hare reported a gap in the verges on Clacton Road where we are not cutting it. This could be where contractors dug up the ground and left too many stones on the surface to be able to cut safely.

It was reported that TDC are looking into the use of s106 funds, so that they can be used more generally.

Minutes of Meeting on 5th December 2024
Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

It was suggested at that meeting that we should do information sheets which tells residents what TDC can and can't do and what we can and can't do.

24/268 Parish Council Newsletter

To discuss initial ideas on a newsletter; frequency, format, content, how to deliver (hard copies, on-line or hybrid), advertising etc.

This will need to be pushed back to the new year, it was suggested that we have a separate meeting about it.

24/269 Bike racks

Bike racks have been requested in the village centre to encourage people to use their bicycles.

The council viewed some options and as it is trying to encourage cycling decided to purchase a £120 toast rack stand for 4 bicycles to be installed at the front of the community centre.

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

24/270 Streetlights

To discuss works needed for streetlights in Church Road which have turned blue.

The clerk reported that the LEDs have already been replaced although the supplier argued that they weren't still covered by the manufacturers warranty. They initially told our contractor that it wasn't a manufacturing fault but the clerk found an Irish news article about Irish council lights turning blue and it being concluded that there was a faulty batch. Our contractor has managed to get the supplier to replace the LEDs and we have been charged for the call out. However we might have difficulty in the future as Holophane (supplier) are saying we only have a one year warranty. We were told at purchase by our contractor that it was a 10 year warranty.

24/271 Mower service

To discuss timing and budget for next mower service.

The last service was done in spring 2024 which was a bad time of year for the mower to be out of use, and it was difficult to get a slot because there were so many mowers being serviced. Our handyman has requested that it be serviced over winter. It will mean that we have two service expenditure items falling in one financial year, but then going forward it will be one per year again.

It was resolved to get the mower serviced by Upsons as for the previous year

December/January with a budget of up to £1,900 which was the previous cost plus 10%,

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

24/272 Items for the next agenda or for information only.

Cllr Gladwin asked for the car park to be added, as there are lots of puddles when it rains.

24/273 Next meeting.

To discuss a possible change from 2nd January to 9th January.

Because the meeting comes so close after staff holiday and the bank holiday it was decided to change the date to 9th January.

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

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

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

Minutes written by Mrs. A Baxter