

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting on 5th June 2025
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 (clerk) and two members of public.

District Councillor: Ann Wiggins.

County Councillor: Carlo Guglielmi

Absent: Cllr Tony Sanders.

25/105 Chairman's welcome and notifications.

Cllr Gladwin welcomed everyone and informed them that the meeting was being recorded.

25/106 Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr Sanders. Apologies were also received from District Councillor Scott.

25/107 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests.

Councillor Richfield declared an interest in item 25/123.

25/108 Approval and signing of the minutes from 1st May 2025.

It was resolved to accept the minutes from 1st May 2025 as true and accurate.

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

25/109 To receive an update about the progress of resolutions from the meeting above not covered in this agenda.

The clerk reported that she hasn't heard back yet from Elmstead Fishing Tackle regarding the event they requested on the playing field.

She has contacted CSH about getting a lockable skip. They said that because of the bend in the lid even if you lock it people can still lift it and fly tip. They suggested that we get a chain so we are looking into that.

We have the Safepoint Lone Worker device now and it's with the handyman. If there is an issue and they can't contact the handyman they will contact the clerk first, then the chairman, then the vice chair.

We have renewed our insurance with Zurich. The clerk went through the process for three quotes but one company wouldn't cover the fidelity figure that we would need with the bank balance we have. The other company quoted double that of Zurich.

The hall is free on the 8th January for our January 2026 meeting.

25/110 Public Speaking

A resident raised the issue that the bus service has been reduced to 1 an hour from 1 every half hour. The buses are unreliable and break down. People have been waiting hours for a bus. This is having a negative impact on our residents. Members of The Marketeers who rely on the buses are very upset. It will also be more difficult to access the schools and colleges in Colchester. The resident has written to Sir Bernard Jenkin MP, ECC and TDC. Because ECC doesn't fund the bus route they can't help us. The council was asked to support the residents in raising awareness.

From 2nd June there is a questionnaire that people can fill in.

Another resident reported that there used to be 21 buses going from Elmstead to Clacton on a Saturday and now there are 14. They are very unreliable. Someone waiting to catch a 10am bus waited an hour and a half and 2 buses didn't come. There are residents who don't drive and need the bus, there are carers that need the bus.

Cllr Guglielmi asked for the resident to share her e-mails with him.

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Another resident has called and written to the bus company but has not heard back at all.

25/111 County Councillor report.

Cllr Guglielmi reported that it has all gone quiet about the Colchester Road crossing. He is going to chase. It was meant to be done by July 2025.

He has escalated the issues regarding Finch Lane.

He doesn't understand why the drain on School Road has been tarmacked over. He is trying to resolve it.

He is trying to get a further response about the closure of the A133. He looked at the Causeway website but couldn't find the information.

The Church Road potholes should have been filled.

Cllr Gladwin reported that a good job was done but they missed a few a bit further up.

Cllr Guglielmi will have another slot later in the summer, we are to send him photos and the locations of those still to do.

Octavius sent a very late invite to their update at the University. Cllr Guglielmi complained, and there will be another session for Elmstead and Ardleigh.

Cllr Brennan asked about the red lines outside Budgens. Cllr Guglielmi responded that the process does take a long time.

The clerk is to send Cllr Guglielmi an e-mail about the red lines outside Budgens and he will chase through the North Essex Parking Partnership.

25/112 District Councillor report.

The report can be viewed at <https://www.elmsteadparishcouncil.org.uk/meeting-reports>.

Cllr Wiggins did attend the Octavius event and also complained about the late notice. They did say that they would be willing to meet members of Elmstead and Ardleigh PCs at their offices. It was quiet whilst Cllr Wiggins was there, but she was told it had been busy.

Cllr Wiggins will get in touch with a resident about the buses to see what can be done.

Cllr Brennan asked about the new play equipment for the Old School Lane park. Cllr Wiggins will ask Cllr Scott.

Cllr Wiggins was asked if there is anything that can be done about the parking in the Poundfield layby. Could it be parking permit only? People are parking there for the insurance company, and adjacent neighbours are parking there too. It's in TDC's hands.

Cllr Guglielmi suggested speaking to someone and will provide Cllr Wiggins with the contact details.

The clerk advised Cllr Wiggins that there are a lot of complaints about ball games on Lucerne Green. TDC has put up a "no ball games sign" but the "no" has been whited out. The clerk has spoken to an open spaces officer. The PC can't do anything because it's not our land. We're waiting to hear back.

The clerk is to send Cllr Wiggins an e-mail about ball games on Lucerne Green.

25/113 New Community Centre and Open Space land.

i) *A report from the committee meeting of 29th May 2025.*

The committee reviewed all the detailed plans and came up with a list of very detailed questions.

ii) *Drawings from Brontide for the preliminary M&E designs and Superstructures for the preliminary foundation and steelwork designs have been circulated for review. To discuss responses received to questions raised with DCB by the committee. Does the council have any additional questions/comments? Can it approve the drawings?*

Cllr Gladwin, Mr Fairweather and Mrs Baxter met with DCB/Brontide today. Everything was resolved in a satisfactory way. We went through heating and lighting in detail. A few requested

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changes were not possible as it has to be done in a certain way.

The next step will be the interior material finishes. The committee will review these at its next meeting.

We're still awaiting the Superstructures drawings. We are a couple of weeks behind schedule. It was resolved that the drawings with changes as discussed at the DCB/Brontide meeting today be agreed. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

iii) Funding.

The council reviewed the current pot. Interest has been added and expenses deducted, as we are now paying monthly invoices to DCB the pot is decreasing.

Cllr Brennan has drafted letters to be sent to Latimers, SRC and landowners. It's previously been resolved to send a letter to Latimers. It was resolved to also write to SRC and landowners to initiate discussions about potential financial contributions. Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Ward, all in favour.

iv) Any other updates.

None.

25/114 Current Community Centre

The lease with the charity ends in September 2025. Any update on options and costs for renewal.

The clerk has requested a quote from Ellisons but has not heard back. The solicitor who provided the lease advice through RCCE has given us a quote but advised that it would be better to stay with the solicitor who has already been involved. He advised that the simplest way to extend is to get a supplemental lease.

The clerk will try again with Ellisons.

25/115 Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community

Any updates?

There are no updates. We've been approached by a Wivenhoe resident who is interested in talking to us about an idea he's had, that he's been speaking to Wivenhoe Cllrs about. Our GC working party will meet with him.

25/116 Playing Field

i) Any updates on the use of the playing field for football.

RHS have given notice, they will not be returning next season. They need to remove their container, Cllr Brennan will chase.

The clerk is to send the final invoice to RHS.

The clerk asked Lambert Smith Hampton if the legal agreement with RHS they have been working on can be used towards a new football team. Their response is that we can only get a new football team with the agreement of ECC and a joint user agreement in place. The concern is we'll have the same issues with a new football team, but if we don't do it then do we need changing rooms in the new community centre? There is a £200k open spaces contribution that can be used towards changing rooms that is part of funding for the NCC. We'd be able to use it for open spaces instead.

The changing rooms space could be used for something else. If kept as changing rooms could they be used for indoor activities? At present the only access is from outside.

It was raised at the NCCC meeting last week that the halls are fully booked. To future proof it does it need additional space? There was a discussion on potential income and expenses for football versus other options.

The pitch on the Charity Field land is not big enough for an adult's team, but children don't need changing rooms.

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There are plenty of teams who want to play on the playing field.

RHS stopped because of issues with the school and the state of the pitch.

A future option could be to have external changing rooms if needed.

We are to have a discussion with the architects on what impact the change would have.

- ii) *To consider a request from Market Field School for sole use of the field until 7pm on Thursday 18th September for a football match.*

It was resolved to agree the above, Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

The clerk is to ask the school to put up signage regarding the late opening time a week before the event.

25/117 Charity Field

- i) *The area to the south of the pathway and under the fence can't be mown or strimmed due to the large amount of stones and gravel. To consider organising a working party or getting a contractor to remove them. There are also big rocks on a third of the field to the north of the path (two thirds of the area has already been cleared).*

Some of the edging of the path has rotted away and the gravel is spreading. Cllr Gladwin will help Mr Dingwall clear the rest of the rocks when he can, but it's the stones and gravel that will be difficult to clear. It needs to be able to be mown because weeds are growing.

We may need to skim the top and then cover it with topsoil and seed. It will eventually migrate to the top but it won't be so bad.

The mower blades are getting blunt a lot quicker.

The clerk and Cllr Gladwin are to discuss potential contractors. Cllr Chable will send suggestions. The cost could be paid out of the s106 open spaces money TDC is holding for Charity Field.

- ii) *TDC has suggested an alternative site to position the dog waste bin, so that the contractor does not have to go over the fence. This is at the start of the pathway close to the fence at the western end of Vaughan Drive. Does the council agree with the location?*

The council reviewed the photos sent by TDC. The council agreed the rough location, underneath the tree and for it to be green to be less of a visual impact for residents.

- iii) *To consider signage for the gate with access off School Road to say no parking in front of the gate.*

We have not received a quote yet, it will be within the range that can be approved by the chairman and clerk.

25/118 Transport

To discuss the reduction of the bus service in Elmstead.

Cllr Guglielmi will forward the bus survey to us. He will ask how subsidised rural areas get funding. An extension to the rapid transport buses for the Garden Community is being pushed for so that the rest of Tendring will benefit.

Should we contact the press? A resident already has.

It was agreed to draft a letter to the bus company and to post on social media. Cllr Ward has drafted a letter to the public transport representative group and will send it to the clerk. She will also send the contact details of the group to Cllr Guglielmi.

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

Cllr Guglielmi left.

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25/119 Finance.

- i) *To look through the finance report and approve payments. See appendix 1.*
Since the original report was sent there have been two additions and one change. The Margab Trailer line was changed because they only require a deposit for now. There are 2 additions for reimbursements to the handyman.
The finance report was approved. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Jeggo, all in favour.
- ii) *An update on banking (accounts and deposits).*
Council reviewed the current summary.

25/120 Finance Committee Meeting

An update from the meeting held on 3rd June.
The committee looked at the year end figures, the audit recommendations and decided on the grant applications. There is a late application from the cricket club to review at the next finance committee meeting.

25/121 Annual Internal Audit

Mrs J Stobart has completed the internal audit for 2024/25 and this has been reviewed by the Finance Committee. Any questions?
The report has been circulated. Cllr Ward thanked the clerk for doing a good job. There were no questions.

25/122 Annual Governance and Accountability Return

- i) *To review for approval the Annual Governance Statement (Annual Return Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25).*
It was resolved to approve the above. Proposed: Cllr Hare, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.
- ii) *To consider for approval Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25.*
It was resolved to approve the above, subject to correcting a typo in box 8, it should match box 7 = £977,751. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Chable, all in favour.
- iii) *Signing of the Governance and Accounting Statements by the Chairman.*
Cllr Gladwin will sign once the typo has been fixed.

25/123 Personnel Committee Meeting

To consider a recommendation from the committee regarding additional help required for village maintenance.
Cllr Richfield left the room due to having a personal interest in the item.
Cllr Brennan reported that the handyman definitely needs help now that he has a larger area to maintain. The committee recommends that in the short term we get help from a contractor with their own insurance (including public liability) and in the long term go through a recruitment process to hire someone as an employee on a fixed term contract to September. Cllr Richfield has suggested a gardening contractor who is her son in law as an emergency measure. It will be for 5 hours a week, on a temporary basis. Before we confirm we need to check the hourly rate and ask for the insurance.
We are checking with EALC on the requirements for advertising for a vacancy and the types of contracts.
The above recommendation was agreed. Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Ward in favour.
Cllr Richfield returned to the room.

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25/124 Tendring District Association of Local Councils

An update from the latest TDALC meeting.

Cllrs Hare and Ward reported that a speaker from the council did not turn up. There was a session with the District Commander Chief Inspector where he spoke about what he is going to do. He's very keen to work with us. There are going to be an additional 7 police officers but not working here. Cllr Ward raised the issue of speed in the Parish.

25/125 Items for the next agenda or for information only.

Cllr Gladwin received a phone call from a representative of a company that has land in the village adjacent to Beth Chatto. The representative has spoken to TD planning with concerns about the Beth Chatto application. He would like to speak with us about their long term plans. Cllr Gladwin and Cllr Richfield (who is on the planning committee) and Mrs Baxter will visit him the week after next.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

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

Minutes written by Mrs. A Baxter.