

Minutes 26th April 2018
Elmstead Parish Council – New Community Centre Committee
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Present: Cllrs Paul Beard (Chair), Bob Kavanagh, Jane Triscott, John Gray and Martine Ward. Mrs C Brock, Mrs E Chubb, Mr R Fairweather, Mrs J Grotier, Mrs H McGrath, Mr P Saill, Mrs D Stammers, Mrs R Valentine, Mr S Wright

Also Present: Mrs Baxter (clerk)

- 18/001 Chairman's welcome**
Cllr Beard welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 18/002 Apologies of Absence**
None
- 18/003 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Non Pecuniary Interests**
None
- 18/004 Approval and signing of the minutes from informal meeting 29th March 2018.**
It was resolved to accept the minutes from 29th March 2018 as true and accurate. Proposed Mr Fairweather, seconded, Cllr Gray, all in favour.
- 18/005 Any further updates and any questions from all the information provided so far?**
Cllr Beard introduced the 5 councillors that the PC has resolved to be members of this committee.
It was resolved that a photo be taken of the committee to publish in Upmarket. Proposed Cllr Ward, Seconded Cllr Gray, the majority in favour.
Cllr Beard: The terms of reference agreed by the PC allow for up to 15 members and there is currently 14. The remaining vacancy could be for someone with experience/skills in an area of special interest.
An update was reported at the last PC meeting. Mr Pomery (Church Road development) had called to ask if he should attend that meeting but didn't. He's keen to move on as soon as possible. He was informed about the committee meetings.
Cllr Triscott: Has been to see the Great Horkesley Hall which is very nice. It's big with a patio, play area and skate park. It's ideal for renting out. It was discussed that the committee can learn from recent hall building projects, what went well, what they'd do differently and how they got their funding.
It was clarified that although the developers at Church Road do not want to build the hall, we still have the choice of where to locate it. The approved planning is for 20 x 4-5 bed houses, they want to change this to 25 smaller houses on the same land. The section 106 agreement says that they have to build the hall, and we could try and push for that but with the new planning application they could try and change the section 106 agreement, potentially removing the hall altogether. We could take the money and arrange to build the hall ourselves on this site, or build it elsewhere. If we build elsewhere then there is a value to the land that is freed up on the site, although this is not known, and would be subject to planning permission being obtained on the land. The Church Road site also includes land for a football pitch and allotments.
The current hall was discussed, it will be up to the committee to make a recommendation regarding using funds from the current hall to fund the new hall and how that might work.

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It was asked whether the idea was to have an eco-friendly sustainable hall. Mr Fairweather confirmed that was part of an original wish list which included automatic lights, eco-friendly toilets and underground heat pumps. These extras will be subject to the budget.

It was discussed that we can work on the basis of £800,000 with £400,000 being contributed by both Church Road and Charity Field (although there is nothing in writing for the Charity Field figure). We may receive more from Church Road if we don't build there, and we can raise additional funding through grants.

Regarding Charity Field, Go Homes do not own the land yet but have started to spend money on the project. They have put in a reserved matters application for the access. There will be one vehicular access only off School Road. It was pointed out that all traffic will need to go through the School Road/Colchester Road crossroads to get to the site. There won't be a pedestrian crossing on School Road. There will be pedestrian access from Alfells.

It was discussed that some members had originally preferred the Church Road site for the new hall, but having had all the discussions so far and knowing that one of the builders is willing to work with us their preference now is to go with this builder (Go Homes).

It was asked if anyone preferred the Church Road site. There was then a discussion around the worry for children and pedestrian access to the Charity Field site. The junction will be improved at the crossroads but there will be no crossing from Budgens side to the development side. Essex Highways did a survey on Church Road and the junction and said there would be no problem with the Charity Field application. It was raised that the Church Road site would have the problem of the stretch of road with no pavement for pedestrian access. Mrs Grotier explained that her preference would be Church Road. It would be a safe place for children to play and use the facilities and it's close to the Primary School. The school does sometimes need a bigger venue so there would be the opportunity to hire the hall. The discussion went on saying that having the hall here could create a central village feel, with the green open spaces. However traffic could be a problem on Church Road, and there is no lighting beyond the houses and it's a narrow road.

For the Charity Field site at present the houses are planned at the north end. It is being negotiated for these to move to the South side with the green space being between these and the back of the Colchester Road houses/businesses. It was discussed that we'll need to consider the hall being hired as a party venue, and the issue of noise for local residents. On Charity Field the hall could be located behind the businesses. The allotments were discussed, both sites have provision for them. They could be kept solely on Church Road, with a car park, which would give more space on Charity Field for other amenities.

After lengthy discussions the following resolution was made:

That the committee agrees that the preferred location for the new hall is on the Charity Field site. The committee makes this recommendation to the PC and asks for approval, subject to the future viability of this scheme. Proposed Cllr Kavanagh, Seconded Mrs Stammers, 13 in favour, 1 against.

The Church Road sec 106 agreement provides a football pitch with a cost of £90,000. It would need changing rooms though. It was suggested it makes sense for the changing rooms to be in the new hall. If this was the case there would be the potential of additional money instead of having the football pitch at Church Road. Or there could be additional amenities, suggestions included: an outdoor gym, tennis courts, MUGA, park or play area.

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Go Homes will not be putting more than 50 houses on Charity Field so there will be plenty of space. A football pitch could be fenced off to keep dogs off. Another suggestion was that some changing rooms be put on the Elmstead playing field, the PC has a 99 year lease on this land. It is already a perfectly good football pitch which drains well. Charity Field could also then be a good site for the suggested facilities; MUGA, outdoor gym, skate park etc. It was discussed that it could be better to keep the football pitch separate and keep the Charity Field amenity space for the use of all residents. However you'd still need changing rooms in the hall for the other facilities. Also the ongoing costs of separate changing rooms on the playing field may be difficult to meet, with just the income from football clubs. It was pointed out that in the outline plan for Charity Field the hall is smaller than we need.

18/006 A discussion on next steps to take and any actions needed to obtain information necessary to make a recommendation to the PC regarding the potential sites of the community centre.

See above agenda item.

18/007 A discussion on next steps to take regarding other aspects of the project.

The committee needs to review the hall design and plan what it wants. Go Homes will draw up the plans for us. Do we ask Go Homes to a meeting and ask them to help? We could put together a subcommittee to look into this and give something to Nigel Tedder to review. Or we could wait until we know that Go Homes has bought the land. Another subcommittee was suggested to look at other halls, find out their lessons learned and advice for funding, and to look into sources of funding.

It was agreed that Cllr Triscott, Mrs Brock and Cllr Ward will look at other halls and funding. It was also agreed that Cllr Gray, Cllr Kavanagh, Mr Wright and Mr Fairweather will look at the designs and plans for the hall.

Mrs McGrath can get details of contacts who may be able to help with funding through her job. Mrs Grotier will do some MUGA research as she has a MUGA at her school.

It was suggested that we put together a parish wish list for the development of the green and open spaces. This could be an article in Upmarket, a letter with tick boxes or a public meeting. This is to be discussed at the next meeting.

18/008 Matters raised by Councillors for the next agenda or for information only.

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting is 7th June 2018. There will be updates from the subcommittees and a report of the PC's decision.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Minuted by Angela Baxter
Contact: elmsteadparish@gmail.com
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Signature

Date