

ELMSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Thursday 21st February, 2013

Present:

Councillors: Cllr. Bell, Cllr. Beecham, Cllr. Gray, Cllr. Sly, Cllr. Redding

Clerk: Mrs. Baxter

Public: Mr. B Jennings, Mr. M Willis, Mrs. P Redding, Mr. R Fairweather, Mr. T Vaughan, Mrs. A Beecham, Ms. E Chubb, Mr. I Mitchell

Meeting Chaired by Cllr. Bell – Chair

Meeting Commenced at 7.30pm

1 Chairman's welcome

2 Apologies for Absence

District Councillor Heaney, District Councillor Nicholls, Cllr. Brock, Cllr. Mason, Cllr. Lloyd, Cllr. Snowden

3 Declaration of Interests

Cllr. Beecham: item 22 (Chairman of the Community Centre Committee) and item 25 (Secretary of the South Green Residents Association)

Cllr. Gray: item 16 (Chair of EMCHAT)

4 Police Report

Police not present

5 Comments from District Councillors

No comments as District Councillors not present

6 Matters raised by Members of the Public

Mr. Fairweather asked who is responsible for cutting back the hedgerows at the Colchester Road end of Tye Road. They are overgrown and the road sweeper can't clear to the edge of the road because of them. There has been flooding because the drains were blocked and he is worried that if the hedgerow is not cut back the drains will get blocked again. It is also dangerous as you have to walk in the road. Mr. Fairweather contacted Essex County Council who came and cleared the blockage.

EPC does not know who owns the land.

Action: Find out who owns the relevant land and ask Essex County Council who is responsible for cutting the hedgerow.

7 Tendring District Local Plan: EPC survey results – Cllr. Redding has been working on some analysis.

Cllr. Redding shared some documents with his analysis of the survey results and made 2 initial comments: 1) Because of the low turnout in survey returns the results might not reflect the village opinion and 2) the analysis can contribute to the Village Plan.

He looked at the surveys where there had been multiple returns from one household and normalized the results for those. He also removed the results from the interest groups to see what the results were. He commented that statistics can be manipulated and that there were lessons to be learned from this survey.

Action: Cllr. Redding will circulate his results to EPC Councillors with a view to putting some analysis on the EPC website.

8 To approve the Minutes of the Meeting from Thursday 17th January 2013.

It was proposed that the Minutes of the Parish Meeting of Thursday 17th January, 2013 be agreed and accepted as a correct record.

Proposed Cllr. Beecham Seconded Cllr. Sly Carried

9 Clerk's Report

No questions

10 Financial

10.1 Finance Report prepared by Clerk

It was proposed that the Finance Report (copy distributed to the Council and attached to Minutes) be agreed.

Proposed Cllr. Sly Seconded Cllr. Beecham Carried

10.2 Additional Bank Signatory – *It was proposed and agreed that Cllr. Gray be made an additional signatory to the EPC Barclay's accounts (current account and interest account)*

Action: Cllr. Gray to go to Barclays and get his identification certified for the application documents

10.3 Service of Mower

Clerk requested quotes from 4 different companies and had one reply: GB Services (quote provided)

Mr. Jennings will give us the phone number of the company he uses. Cllr. Redding provided an advert for a lawnmower service company.

Action: Clerk to seek additional quotes from these two sources.

In addition to the service the insurance (with Aon) for the mower is coming up for renewal and has been increased to £228.66. Mr. Jennings commented he uses NFU for his insurance. Cllr. Bell stated that as the lawnmower is in storage we can defer payment and have time to look for an alternative. Cllr. Redding said that might result in a SORN as the vehicle does have a license disc.

Action: Call Aon to see if they can offer a better quote and seek alternative insurance quotes.

11 Personnel

11.1 Co-option procedure

The Personnel Committee asks that the Council agree the following co-option procedure:

Proposal: Once someone has expressed an interest in joining the Council they can speak to the Clerk who will give them some information. They will be invited to attend a Council meeting. At the end of the meeting any Councillors who would like to will be able to join a conversation with the potential Councillor. The potential Councillor will then have time to think about whether they would still like to join. If they are still interested they will be invited to the next meeting to be voted onto the Council.

Proposed Cllr. Sly Seconded Cllr. Redding Carried

11.2 Clerk's salary arrangements

Cllr. Bell explained that the Personnel Committee Meeting had agreed that the next salary review would be on 7th May, 2013 and that in the meantime the Clerk would attend training courses.

11.3 Clerk's training courses for March and April

EPC pay for the courses, there are grants to smaller Parish Councils but our precept is above the limit.

12 Annual Parish Meeting

A meeting for electors to be held 1 March – 1 June. Discuss ideas for the meeting, any ways to encourage the village to attend and ideas for presentations, displays, etc.

Suggestions about content: Villagers to come and have their say about the new Community Centre, something from the Local Plan (possible ask Mr. Guiver to attend), invite clubs who use the Community Centre.
Suggestions about timing and advertising: May as the weather will be nicer, possibly a Saturday to encourage people to come and put out a flier for the event.

Action: Cllrs to e-mail their suggestions to the Clerk.

13 Response to community infrastructure request. Questionnaire has been shared – should we create a working party?

Cllr Bell: We received an e-mail on 18th February from Mr. Phillipson asking for information about how many properties are not connected to a mains service (gas, electricity, water and sewerage). Cllr. Bell called him and he asked that we continue with the survey and finish it as soon as possible. We need to contact the outlying households to ask what services they have. We'll have to visit or write.

Action: Make a leaflet to put through the letterbox. The Councillors will split the houses between them and ask for the information.

14 High Speed Broadband for Tendring

TDC in partnership with ECC have asked Parish Councils to promote a survey for residents and businesses across Essex to prove demand for superfast broadband. It's an on-line survey but we can also ask for hard copies. Upgrade is not guaranteed, but those areas with the most residents and businesses registered stand a greater chance of being selected as one of the first to receive an enhanced service. How can we best encourage our residents and businesses to complete the survey?

Action: Put an article in Upmarket about the survey. It will need to be submitted before 7th March.

15 Minerals Local Plan: Sunnymede Farm, Arlesford/Elmstead

Cllr. Bell attended an open meeting in Arlesford on this topic and will share the results of the meeting.

Cllr. Bell: We have only recently been included in communication about this prospective minerals site, but part of it is in Elmstead. The site is adjacent to Cockaynes Wood nature reserve and there are 26 properties on its boundary. The main concern for Elmstead is additional traffic up School Road. Arlesford have experience and knowledge on minerals sites and we've asked them to keep us informed on the paperwork and workings. We don't have the experience.

Action: Cllr. Bell to keep in contact with the Chair of Arlesford

16 EMCHAT

Cllr. Gray: There was no EMCHAT meeting and nothing to report.

17 Planning

17.1 New Planning Applications Received

13/00098/FUL Retaining existing mobile home; touring caravan and utilities unit as a permanent planning permission at Clacton Road, Elmstead

Cllr. Bell and Mr. Jennings (lives next door to the site) provided some history of the site.
The Council's objections to the application will be on planning grounds and the fact that Tendring now have enough travellers sites so shouldn't approve another.

Action: Put the objections together and circulate to Councillors before providing feedback to TDC.

13/00097/FUL Change of use of existing building from business to place of worship/church hall at St Johns works, Bromley Road, Elmstead

No objections

13/00062/FUL Rear extension, relocation of front door, removal of side flat roofed extension and removal of chimneys at Glenhurst, Bromley Road, Elmstead - no comment made, deadline passed

17.2 Decisions in the Month

12/01168/FUL Replacement of two mobile homes with one three bedroom bungalow at land adjacent to Pumping Station, Clacton Road, Elmstead – Application withdrawn

12/01397/FUL 4 Two storey side extension at 4 Oatlands, Elmstead – Full Approval

18 Old Post Office

This is now in the hands of TDC and English Heritage as the Parish Council does not have the power to do anything about it. TDC are engaging English Heritage to try and come to a solution.

19 Travellers site in Clacton Road

Discussed in item 17.1

20 Village Plan working party update

The working party had a meeting on 7th February. They suggested that the type of plan that would suit Elmstead best is a Village Appraisal. It's the least onerous, least expensive and a good starting block. The working party will need members of the public on it; EPC could put an article in Upmarket to ask for volunteers.

The Village Appraisal would involve surveying the village and there is likely to be survey fatigue at the moment so now is the time to focus on planning.

EPC need a good method of communication to let people know what we're trying to do. In the future the working party will need a budget.

Action: Cllr. Gray to speak to Clerk about contacting 3 local villages/towns that have village plans to research how they got started and so on.

21 Communication

21.1 Following on from Village Plan working party update:

Importance of communication to whichever Village Plan approach is agreed

21.2 Generally improving Parish Council communication with the village:

- Quarterly Parish Council Newsletter?
- Contact details for councillors on website?
- Optimising website content/appearance?
- Do we need a communications committee?

It was agreed by those Councillors present that contact details for Councillors should be made available to the public. It was suggested that we provide Parish Council surgeries.

Action: Clerk to contact all Councillors and ask them if they agree.

It was thought that a quarterly newsletter would be a good idea.

Action: Clerk to see which Councillors would like to be involved.

22 Community Centre Heating

Cllr. Sly provided the following statement for discussion: The existing system is probably in-adequate. The present system should be re-designed by a heating engineer. A re-designed heating system should be installed during the coming months in readiness for the 2013/14 winter. The heating system should be classed as part of the Community Centre structure, and the responsibility of the Parish Council.

The heating goes on an hour before meetings, it isn't on all the time as there is no insulation in the building (in the walls or ceiling). Cllr. Sly asked for a survey to be done by a heating engineer to see if the heating is adequate.

Cllr. Beecham responded that the boiler is adequate for the building. If both halls are being heated at the same time then it affects the heating. Also if one hall is heated it loses heat to the other hall. No matter how big the boiler the hall would still take the same time to heat up.

Action: Cllr. Beecham will look into the problem of heat zoning with Ellen Chubb and get back to us for the next meeting.

Cllr. Sly asked that the Council take on responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the heating system. At the moment EPC is responsible for the exterior of the building and the Community Centre Committee is responsible for the interior.

Cllr. Sly was requested to formulate that into a detailed proposal. Ellen Chubb was asked to provide the expenditure and financial position of the Community Centre.

23 Notice boards

Cllr. Beecham has made an offer to make new notice boards at cost price, with no charge for labour.

Action: Cllr. Beecham to measure the notice boards and provide quotes. Our notice boards are on the Community Centre, on North Green and Harvest Way.

24 North Green

There are missing posts on the eastern edge of the north green where the cars park in Chapel lane. The grass is slowly being eroded away as some cars are parking on the grass edge.

Action: It was agreed to speak to the handyman to get wooden posts put in.

25 South Green

Cllr. Beecham (secretary of the South Green Residents Association) provided the following information for discussion: The South Green Residents Association wishes to make the tracks a safe place for the whole of the Parish to use. It has long been a grey area issue. EPC's last letter to the residents informed us that it is our responsibility to repair the track. I admit that we would be obliged to contribute to repairs because we as residents use the track. But you must be aware that we do not own the tracks and when you consider that in general a private road is a cul-de-sac used only by the residents and their visitors. Our track is also used by the whole of the parish and more so than the residents, with vehicular use at the end where the commercial properties are. Mr Pools has at least ten or more cars on a daily basis seven days a week let alone the post office and other business venture's. The residents use the track far less than the remainder of the parish. We as residents feel that the parish on behalf of the other parish residents should be paying for the repairs with the tracks residents' contribution as per your last then rejected offer. As residents we are quite prepared to contribute by way of carrying out the repairs to the potholes by scraping off the top, filling and packing the surface ready for a tar top finish. We live in the parish where we pay our rates as do others but at present do not have the luxury as others of having a safe footpath to walk along. When the parish paid out for the redefining of the green in 1980 they widened the track of which we consider to be part of the green as a footpath, of which according to document numbered VG14 has only been designated as a permissible footpath.

Cllr. Beecham asks that EPC contribute financially or in other ways to the repair of the South Green Tracks.

Cllr. Gray is worried that would set a precedent and thought that some payment could be made as a grant to the organization.

Cllr. Sly asked if the residential part could be turned into a cul-de-sac. Cllr. Beecham replied that there were posts at the end in the 1930s and that the association would like to see them there again.

Cllr. Bell said that there is a lot of history to this subject. The last time it was looked at the solicitors advised EPC that they should stop the process.

Action: Get a summary of the history from the files in the office and share with all Councillors and put this on the agenda for March.

26 Tidy Tending Campaign

Would we like to register our interest in joining the campaign? We would need to do so, with our ideas, before 31st March 2013.

Action: Ask Tending for more information and add to March agenda.

27 Matters Raised by Councillors for the next agenda

Cllr. Redding commented that the new structure of the agenda was a great improvement. Villagers looking at the agenda will now have more idea about what is going to be discussed and can decide whether to come.

Cllr. Gray remembered District Councillors Heaney and Nicholls saying that there was funding for repairs so perhaps that could be used for the South Green Tracks. Cllr. Beecham had a copy of an e-mail showing the Local Highways Panel Request Process, which describes how to apply for the funding.

Action: Cllr. Beecham to contact the Clerk to discuss the fund application e-mail.

Cllr. Beecham asked that painting the exterior of the building be put on the agenda for March.

**There being no further business Councillors were thanked for their attendance.
Meeting closed at 9.43pm**

**Date of next Parish Meeting: Thursday 21st March, 2013
To be held in the Community Centre, School Road CO7 7ET**

**Minuted by Angela Baxter,
21st February, 2013
Contact: elmsteadparish@btconnect.com
Telephone: 01206 827139
Appendix to the original Minutes:**

Clerk's Report for 21st February, 2013
Finance Report dated 14th February, 2013 prepared by the Clerk.

All other relevant correspondence has been circulated prior to the meeting and available upon request.