

Minutes of Meeting on 20th November 2025
Elmstead Parish Council – New Community Centre Committee
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Present: Mr R Fairweather, Cllr A Gladwin, Mrs J Grotier (Chairman), Cllr M Hare, Cllr T Sanders, Mrs D Stammers, Mrs R Valentine, Cllr M Ward and Mr S Wright.

Also present: Mrs Baxter (Parish Clerk).

Not present: Cllr L Richfield and Mrs J Triscott.

25/078 Chairman's welcome

Mrs Grotier welcomed everybody.

25/079 Apologies of Absence

Apologies were received from Mrs J Triscott.

25/080 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests

None.

Mr Fairweather raised that at the last PC meeting our county councillor asked if Rose Builders had returned a tender. Should he have done that when the tenderers were being kept anonymous and he and Rose Builders come from the same area? The PC wasn't able to answer because the tenderers were not known at the time.

It was felt prudent for the clerk to raise this with our county councillor.

25/081 Approval and signing of the minutes from the meeting of 25th September 2025

It was resolved to accept the minutes from the meeting of 25th September 2025 as true and accurate. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Mrs Valentine, all in favour.

25/082 Public Speaking

No public present.

25/083 Work stage 4b (tender stage).

i) An update on the tender stage.

17 tenders have been submitted. The clerk will be witnessed opening the tenders by Cllr Brennan and it was requested that the process be videoed for transparency. They are all e-mail submissions. After opening the clerk will redact all the tenders, upload them onto the google drive and then share them with committee members and councillors. The chosen representatives will be scoring them so if anyone wishes to provide feedback to them they can.

ii) To review the scoring matrix.

The committee reviewed the scoring matrix. The clerk is to change the scale from 1 to 5 to 1 to 10. The same descriptors will cover 2 points.

The committee looked at the evidence of experience criterion and the number of projects to be used under each description in order to be realistic. A comparable building could be comparable by size, budget or use and whether it's for public use. For example schools, libraries, other council buildings, doctors' surgeries. Or a private building for a similar function, like private healthcare. We should also check construction method. Satisfactory will be one comparable project and good will be two compatible projects.

The clerk checked the tender to see what time span we asked for relevant experience for, it was five years. There was a further detailed discussion on the matrix and the criteria.

It was asked if there is anything that looks at health and safety. They should have the relevant accreditations and include those in their tenders. We should be able to then check

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that they are valid.

For communication we will largely be looking at the quality of the tender response. We need to allow for technical language.

The cost/value criterion will be directly comparable. We can disregard tenders that are abnormally low.

We have specified a minimum £2.5 million professional indemnity insurance. We did say we retained the right to check financial backgrounds so we can run a credit check and review companies house. Once we have the top few we'll do some research.

iii) *To agree representatives to use the scoring matrix to score the tenders.*

It was suggested that there are 3 councillors, 3 committee non councillor members and DCB with the help of the QS to score the tenders. The DCB/QS role may be more of an advisory one if we need help with the scoring. The council have agreed Cllrs Gladwin and Sanders with one other to be decided. Mr Fairweather has suggested himself and Mr Wright from the committee. Committee members were asked if they would like to score the tenders. The tender scoring will take hours and couldn't be done at the meeting.

Mr Fairweather will ask Mrs Triscott if she would like to score the tenders.

It was asked how long it would be before the paperwork would be ready. The clerk will do it as quickly as she can but doesn't know how long it will take to redact 17 tenders.

If there are only two scorers from the committee it can be two councillors and two committee members. We'll wait and see what Mrs Triscott says.

Mr Fairweather is concerned about the costing the QS originally came up with. Cllr Sanders didn't see the quote but we'll have a better idea when we get the tenders.

We'll meet with DCB next week to discuss the tenders. DCB will also only see the redacted documents to keep it bias free. They will do their checks once we have our final few.

The clerk can do checks in the meantime if necessary.

25/084 Funding update

Any updates on funding.

There are no changes since the last update.

25/085 Any other updates

Cllr Gladwin shared that some PC councillors met with Latimer. They gave us an update and included details on the first phase of the Garden Community. This will include a community centre, so our reasoning to request a contribution to our new community centre did not stand as the Garden Community residents will have their own. Latimer have had to commit a large sum towards the link road and do not have the funding to donate to our community centre. They have offered their consultants to help us. TDC says that we have not provided all the information required for the biodiversity net gain condition, but the consultants who did our report are not responding so we could ask Latimer if they have someone who can help.

Mr Fairweather asked about the lottery application. Cllr Gladwin will be meeting someone this weekend who has recently been awarded a large grant and seek advice on completing the application.

Cllr Guglielmi is communicating with Lanswood about the deed of variation and he is being told that they don't see any problem with doing it. However it's been a long time and it needs doing urgently.

Mr Fairweather reported that Mrs J Stobart (RCCE) has advised him that we can't enter into a contract unless we have all the money. It will take at least 6 months to get the lottery money. . It was responded that we will be looking to split contracts into lots. We have the option to

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explore a public works loan with the value of the current community centre to be realised in the future. The Lanswood open spaces contribution will help once we have the deed of variation completed so that it includes the car park. The car park could be a separate contract to be agreed once the deed is signed. We don't know the final cost yet and what the shortfall will be.

25/086 Matters raised for the next agenda or for information only

Mr Fairweather requested that the community centre car park be added to the next PC agenda, as there are bad potholes which cause flooding. The handyman has been doing ongoing infills of the potholes but it is still bad. There was ice on the car park this morning. This is a health and safety issue.

25/087 Date of next committee meeting

The next meeting will be to discuss the scores. We've pencilled in an extraordinary PC meeting on the 11th December but we may need to delay the decision until the January meeting depending how long the process takes. Dates were reviewed and Thursday 11th December was agreed.

The meeting closed at 8.17pm.

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