

Minutes of Meeting on 25th September 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, Mrs D Stammers, Mrs R Valentine and Cllr M Ward.

Not present:, Cllr L Richfield, Cllr T Sanders, Mrs L Scott, Mrs J Triscott and Mr S Wright.

25/066 Chairman's welcome

Mrs Grotier welcomed everybody.

25/067 Apologies of Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Sanders and Mrs Triscott. As Mrs Triscott has been unable to attend for a number of months the committee were asked to consider the approval of her apologies.

It was resolved to accept Mrs Triscott's apologies. Proposed: Cllr Ward, Seconded: Mrs Valentine, all in favour.

25/068 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests

None.

25/069 Approval and signing of the minutes from the meeting of 26th June 2025

The clerk explained that there was a paragraph regarding the colour of the windows in the June minutes but Mr Fairweather felt it didn't fully reflect the discussion.

It was resolved to accept the minutes from the meeting of 26th June 2025 as true and accurate. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Hare, 4 in favour, 3 against.

There was a discussion on asking the council to change the window colours from white to anthracite. It's currently part of the planning permission, but we will have an opportunity in the future to revisit the colour. Some committee members favoured white and some anthracite but a vote hasn't been taken.

It was resolved that we wait until we get the tenders and choosing a builder before deciding.

We can see if there is a financial advantage to either colour. Proposed: Mrs Grotier, Seconded Cllr Gladwin, all in favour.

25/070 Approval and signing of the minutes from the meeting of 28th August 2025

It was resolved to accept the minutes from the meeting of 28th August 2025 as true and accurate. Proposed: Cllr Ward, Seconded: Cllr Hare, all in favour.

25/071 Public Speaking

None.

25/072 Work stages 4a (building regulation stage) and 4b (tender stage).

i) To discuss timing for meetings and decisions to be made.

Cllr Gladwin explained that we have the tender documents and the council decided at the last meeting that we wanted to get the entire package ready to go. We are going to write up a tender briefing which DCB and the QS will review for us. There are a few tweaks still to do to the designs but we'll go through these once we have chosen a builder.

Mr Fairweather asked if we had an updated price. We still have the original price from the QS but we'll be working down from that. The lottery will need a price for our funding application, but we can use the quantity of works for that.

Once the council has agreed the tender briefing it will approve the start of the tender process.

The tender will be live for 5 weeks on the government website. We've had quite a few queries from builders who are interested so we are hopeful there will be a lot of interest.

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It was asked if there are levels of compliancy that builders have to meet to tender. We will have several criteria as part of the scoring matrix that will look at qualifications, evidence of comparable buildings, and we have said that we may do credit checks to check financial stability. Public liability insurance will be part of the contract.

RIBA will ensure compliancy with some requirements. We will need to have our own checklist for insurance, qualifications etc. for our own due diligence.

Cllr Gladwin has been reviewing other similar projects on Find a Tender.

For timing it was discussed that it would be good to decide in December. This will impact the timing of the NCCC and PC meetings.

ii) To discuss a tender scoring matrix.

The committee reviewed an example of a scoring document. It starts with pass/fail requirements. You can rule out non-compliant tenders. A preference for local builders was suggested but the difficulty is in how you define local.

The recommendation for scoring the matrix is that you have separate small groups of people or individuals who do that scoring and then an average of their scores is taken. The scoring will then give a winning tender.

Price and experience are going to be significant criteria. For example, a builder who has already built a community centre might score a 5 out of 5 for that criterion. We need to pick the scoring descriptions before we make the decisions (i.e. context as to what a specific score looks like). We may need to score out of a higher number than 5.

It was discussed as to how we split pricing and quality/compliance. Different splits were suggested and discussed. It was suggested that as we have fully designed the building we have better security on the quality and should focus on getting value for money. There may not be many builders who have built community centres, but experience of other public buildings can be considered. The council will need to decide the criteria and percentages next week as they have to be included in the tender notice.

It was proposed to use a 40% price and 60% quality model but there was no seconder.

It was resolved to split the criteria as 60% under the pricing criteria and 40% under the quality criteria. Proposed: Mr Fairweather, Seconded: Cllr Gladwin, 5 in favour, 1 abstention, 1 against.

We'll put together a more detailed breakdown that follows that split and share that with the committee to enable them to provide any feedback for the PC meeting.

iii) To discuss other information to be provided with the tender documents, to include a briefing document/introduction.

Cllr Gladwin is working on it and will circulate it with the criteria breakdown.

25/073 Survey

To discuss survey results.

At the last count we've had 237 households respond, that represents more individuals as the questions in the survey do cover multiple occupants. The clerk did get requests for paper surveys. She also put a notice on Facebook which resulted in more people requesting the survey.

We have around 1,200 houses but we don't know the current population.

Once the survey summary has been completed it will be circulated.

The quality of the grass on the field and its ability to be used for football was discussed. We may need to look at improvements to the field after this winter when we can see what the drainage is like.

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25/074 Funding update

i) To review the current funding.

The committee reviewed the finance summary to the end of August. It was asked if there will be much more expenditure. It depends upon how we go forward with project management beyond the tender.

ii) Any update on potential additional funding or the public survey.

We have a meeting arranged with Latimer to discuss a potential contribution to the new community centre.

It was asked what is happening with the Lanswood money. The clerk has not heard back from Lanswood but has spoken to their planning consultant and Cllr Guglielmi. Cllr Guglielmi will contact Lanswood about getting the deed of variation done. He would like to be clear in exactly what he is asking for. The current wording for the funding is for a 3G pitch. Lanswood agreed and applied for a deed of variation for open space equipment and works to improve access. The clerk asked TDC if that wording could cover a car park and access road. They said it would be OK but they would rather it be in the actual description. As that deed of variation was never signed off by Lanswood's solicitor we need to still apply for one, and can put that wording in.

The lottery application can be completed once we have the survey analysis.

The next steps are that the PC will decide on the criteria next week and the tender will go out the week after. We'll look at all the tenders after the submission date, not before then. Anyone in the UK can submit a tender.

25/075 Any other updates

None.

25/076 Matters raised for the next agenda or for information only

There is an option to hold an event for builders to come and speak to us and look at the site. We need to stay impartial and builders can look at the site independently if they wish to so we won't arrange for an event.

Cllr Hare left the meeting.

25/077 Date of next committee meeting

The December date would fall on the 25th so there won't be meeting then. We might want a meeting at the end of November and another one a couple of weeks later to allow for asking the tenderers questions and getting responses. It's unlikely we'll need an October meeting unless something comes up.

The meeting closed at 8.43pm.

Contact: elmsteadparish@gmail.com

Telephone: 07907 610381

Signature

Date