

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting on 4th December 2025
Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Present: Cllrs Adam Gladwin (Chairman), Amanda Brennan, James Chable, Maxine Jeggo, Michael Hare, Tony Sanders and Martine Ward.

Also Present: Mrs Baxter (clerk) and one member of public.

District Councillors: Gary Scott and Ann Wiggins.

Absent: Cllr Liz Richfield.

25/205 Chairman's welcome and notifications.

Cllr Gladwin welcomed everybody.

25/206 Apologies for Absence.

Cllr Richfield sent her apologies. County Councillor Guglielmi also sent his apologies.

25/207 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests.

None.

25/208 Approval and signing of the minutes from 6th November 2025.

It was resolved to accept the minutes from 6th November 2025 as true and accurate.

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

25/209 To receive an update about the progress of resolutions from the meeting above not covered in this agenda.

The clerk reported that she has not contacted Wivenhoe Town Council or found councillor training to meet Assertion 10 of the 2025/26 Annual Return yet.

It was reported that there is a portacabin on Dene Park, it's Cadent (gas). It's there because of the roadworks being done. The clerk will try to make contact.

25/210 Public Speaking

A member of public reported a large increase in vehicles parking on and blocking the pavement. It's not illegal to park on the pavement, but causing an obstruction is. He has seen people having to walk in the roads, and tried to report it to the police, however they don't seem interested. Bromley Road and Church Road are an issue. Cllr Chable added that it's also a problem in Holly Way. There's been an increase in parking around the Holly Way/Church Road junction. It's causing issues with driving through the junction safely. Cllr Scott reported that he has received numerous e-mails. One issue reported is on the double yellow lines on the corner of Old School Road and Bromley Road. NEPP (North Essex Parking Partnership) says it is an offence because there are double yellow lines there. They will visit but the parking is random so it will be difficult to time the visit with the parking.

Regarding Bromley Road they have received lots of complaints and have been trying to arrange a meeting with the head of housing to discuss the layby.

For Church Road Essex Highways would need to put something in, double yellow or red lines to stop people parking on/near the junction. NEPP won't do anything for Church Road unless there are road markings.

It is possible that it's Market Field School staff parking up Church Road, with the works going on at the school.

It was discussed that part of Church Road near the junction with only one narrow pavement could benefit from restrictive lines, to stop people having to walk in the road.

The clerk is to check with Cllr Guglielmi about the red lines to be painted around the School Road, Colchester Road junction and also ask about what we can do along Church Road.

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A member of public also raised the blocked drain on Church Road at the junction. It's causing bad flooding. Cllr Gladwin will report this to Cllr Guglielmi.

25/211 County Councillor report.

This has been circulated. This can be viewed at <https://www.elmsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk/meeting-reports>

25/212 District Councillor report.

Cllr Scott read through the report. This can be viewed at <https://www.elmsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk/meeting-reports>

Cllr Scott has spoken to the head of planning at TDC about having a meeting with the PC about s106 funds for the new community centre.

The clerk is to e-mail Cllr Scott with the details for the discussion.

From April 2026 TDC will be under a new contract with Veolia. They will be collecting glass and more plastic from households. The recycling banks will be phased out. They have a 3 plus 1 plus 1 year contract, it's less than the usual 7 years because of LGR (Local Government Reorganisation). There will be no change to recycling centres which are run by ECC.

If there are any issues with Veolia collections contact Cllrs Scott and Wiggins who will pass it on.

The LGR consultation on the number of Unitaries is now closed. The mayoral elections have been postponed and there may be county elections in 2026.

25/213 Charity Field

There have been issues with public and vehicles accessing the field for non-authorized purposes.

i) An update on the recent damage to the field and reparations required.

A large lorry drove onto the field, got stuck and had to be pulled out by a tractor which has left deep holes and tracks in the field. The resident who organised the delivery has said he will repair the field. We'll leave it until January and if it isn't repaired we'll look at arranging the works and sending the invoice to the resident instead. Some cones have been put out.

ii) To consider a policy for use of the field. To include that permission for any use other than approved use must be requested from the council and approved before the use. Signage will be required.

It was agreed that a policy and signage is required. It was discussed that the policy or a letter should be posted to surrounding residences. Council reviewed some example signage but it doesn't cover our situation. To include this on the January agenda.

Cllr Gladwin will speak to the handyman about a second lock on the gate to improve security.

iii) To consider the use of CCTV for the playing field.

There are cheap battery powered wireless options that we can connect to the community centre wireless. We can get ones that are triggered by car movements. We will need to put up signage. Users would be limited for privacy. We need to check the data protection requirements. Cllr Gladwin will look into options. To add to the January agenda.

iv) To consider means to stop vehicles being able to drive onto the field. One suggestion is rock filled gabion baskets.

The lorry didn't go through the gate because it couldn't get through. They took some of the fence down and accessed the field from Vaughan Drive. There are only 2 gaps where a vehicle could drive through.

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The clerk contacted Dean's about delivering bags of soil to use as a barrier, but it's not something they do. Cllr Gladwin suggested rock filled gabions, council reviewed some options of gabions and rocks. The rocks are more expensive than the gabions but we don't need to fill them up. Different sizes and amounts were discussed. A half meter cube would be about £15. It was thought that one bag of rocks and 2 gabions would be sufficient. Cllr Gladwin will check how many are required, it will be less than 5.
It was resolved to purchase the half meter cubed gabions and rocks once Cllr Gladwin has confirmed how many.
Proposed: Cllr Sanders, Seconded: Cllr Jeggo, all in favour.

25/214 Community Centre car park

To consider works to the car park to improve the potholes. A delivery of 2-3 tonnes of scalping has been suggested. The handyman would need additional help with this job.
It was suggested that we speak to the contractor who is doing the school roof and see if they can put something down. It was suggested to wait until after the skip lorries finish driving through the car park. They've had to remove the welfare unit, it's now in the school car park. Cllr Chable will ask them tomorrow.

25/215 Allotments.

Any updates?

Cllr Sanders reported that Cllr Richfield is waiting for some fencing quotes. The clerk has heard from the solicitor regarding the questions she sent. The biggest question was about not being able to erect any fencing within 3m of the easement zone. He advised that if we want to put the fence any closer we need to get permission from the transferor and the utility company. He suspects that as long as there is clear access it should be fine but we need to contact them to make sure.
Cllr Sanders suggested demountable fencing to ensure access. Cllr Sanders will check which utility company it is for the pumping station.
Once the transfer is ready for signing our solicitor will chase Mr Newell to finish works on the allotments. TDC has also said that they will need to confirm the allotments meet the specification before the transfer can be completed.
It was resolved to go ahead with the transfer once we have permission to install the fence.
Proposed: Cllr Sanders, Seconded: Cllr Gladwin, all in favour.

25/216 Finance.

i) To look through the finance report and approve payments. See appendix 1.

The finance report was approved. Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Jeggo, all in favour.

ii) An update on banking (accounts and deposits).

Council reviewed the balances.

iii) To consider a grant application from Essex & Herts Air Ambulance.

There is unused grant budget of £700.

It was resolved to make a £200 donation. Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Sanders, all in favour.

25/217 Events

i) Wednesday hub.

Cllr Ward reported that they had a Christmas party and next week will be the last hub for the year.

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ii) Christmas.

Cllr Jeggo reported that the lights are up on the green. The Christmas event this Sunday is all sorted. We have a new gingerbread house competition.

iii) To discuss a possible easter event in 2026.

The working party are thinking of not doing Halloween next year and approaching the cricket club about an easter event. Council is happy for them to do this.

iv) Any other event updates?

None.

25/218 New Community Centre and Open Space land.

i) An update from the committee meeting of 20th November.

The meeting was held to decide who would score the matrices. The committee agreed two members with a possible addition, but we've since received an e-mail to say that due to ill health they wouldn't be able to do it.

The committee requested that when we opened the tender e-mails it was video recorded, so that was done. They also felt very strongly that our architects should have redacted documents, so nobody knows who the tenderers are.

ii) An update on a meeting with DCB on 26th November.

DCB started by telling us which tenders were disqualified because they hadn't provided the information required by the tender notice. Cllrs Gladwin and Sanders have scored the remaining 11.

The quantity surveyor will go through the favoured tenders to check that the costs are on a level playing field and that everything is compliant. This could take 2 to 3 weeks depending on the questions that are being asked.

DCB recommended that we look at 2 to 3 tenders for the value engineering.

iii) To consider approval of DCB's costs for RIBA stage 5 – construction.

DCB has quoted for stages 5 and 6 which includes their costs and their subcontractors until handover of the final building. The subcontractors will be Brontide and Superstructures. There will also be an additional payment to Socotec which has already been agreed.

The total cost is £77,000 and it's been broken down into month 1 and then months 2 to 8 and month 9. DCB will be our appointed principal designer which is required by law. They will be visiting weekly. This is in line with an expected 10-15% for the design costs for an approximate build cost of £2 million if we take into account the fees already paid.

It was resolved to agree the DCB quote for stages 5 and 6 which includes appointing DCB as our principal designer.

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

iv) To consider a revision to the procurement timetable dates c) tender evaluation and questions, d) tender confirmation and e) contract start date.

The QS will need 2-3 weeks to interrogate the Bills of Quantities and query the builders which takes us to the end of December. The council has put the date of the decision back to the 15th January already. It was agreed to change c) to late December, d) to 6th February and e) to end March/start April. This gives January to do value engineering across 2 to 3 tenders.

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

v) To discuss timing for meetings for upcoming decisions.

As above.

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vi) Any update on the deed of variation?

Cllr Guglielmi has been communicating with Lanswood but is being told they are looking into it. The deed of variation has already been through the system and we just need to tweak the wording, so do we need a solicitor. Mr Guiver (TDC) might be able to help us with this, we need to organise a meeting with him urgently.
It was resolved, subject to the meeting with Mr Guiver, that if it will be timelier for the council to submit the deed of variation request, it will do so. It resolved to delegate authority to approve the cost of the deed of variation to the clerk in consultation with the chairman. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Sanders, all in favour.

vii) Biodiversity net gain planning condition.

DCB were not impressed with our previous surveyor and they have not been able to get in touch with them to do any more work. TDC has advised that we have not met the requirements for this pre-commencement condition. We can try and meet with Mr Pateman-Gee to clarify what exactly is needed or to ask Latimer if they can help us. Cllr Scott suggested that we meet with Mr Patemen-Gee when we meet with Mr Guiver. This will be included in our e-mail request for a meeting.

viii) Any other updates.

None.

25/219 Exclusion of press and public for private and confidential matters under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s.1(2) as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

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

Members of public left the meeting.

25/220 New Community Centre.

i) To review the completed decision matrices for the tenders and consider questions to ask.

Council reviewed the results of the scoring matrices. There are a top 3, with a 4th half a percent behind but the remainder are lower scoring. The tenders were redacted but you could still see their examples of similar experience. Cllr Gladwin thanked Cllr Sanders and the clerk for their work on the tenders.

We have some questions, but more will come out now the QS will be reviewing them.

We'll reduce the tender folder to the top 3 or 4 so that members can review them.

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

ii) To agree top scoring tender/s to notify Hoggarth Cooke Knight for a detailed review on costs and compliance.

Council resolved that the top 3 scoring tenders go to our QS and DCB for a detailed review of cost and compliance. 4th will be kept as a reserve. As 2nd and 3rd place are scored equally the lowest cost will be 2nd place.

Tender 7 is 1st place, tender 15 is 2nd place and tender 9 is 3rd place.

It was agreed that the tenders be unredacted now. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Sanders, all in favour.

iii) To discuss value engineering options.

As above.

Signature

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25/221 Items for the next agenda or for information only.
None.

25/222 Date of next meeting
8th January 2026.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.
There being no further business councillors were thanked for their attendance.
Minutes written by Mrs. A Baxter.