

**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2025**  
**Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council**  
Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET

Present: Cllrs Adam Gladwin (Chairman), Amanda Brennan, , Maxine Jeggo, Liz Richfield and Tony Sanders.

Also Present: Mrs Baxter (clerk) and two members of public.

District Councillors: Gary Scott and Ann Wiggins.

County Councillor: Carlo Guglielmi.

Absent: Cllrs James Chable, Michael Hare and Martine Ward.

**25/146 Chairman's welcome and notifications.**

Cllr Gladwin welcomed everyone and informed them that the meeting was being recorded.

**25/147 Apologies for Absence.**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Hare and Ward.

**25/148 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests.**

None.

**25/149 Election of Vice-Chair.**

Cllr Brennan explained why she was standing down.

It was resolved to elect Cllr Sanders as Vice-Chair. Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Gladwin, all in favour.

**25/150 Approval and signing of the minutes from 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025.**

It was resolved to accept the minutes from 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025 as true and accurate.

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

**25/151 To receive an update about the progress of resolutions from the meeting above not covered in this agenda.**

The clerk updated that a letter was sent to Hedingham bus company about the reduced bus service and we received a response which has been circulated. It didn't say much.

A litter bin has not yet been purchased for Charity Field.

The works have been done to Charity Field to remove the weeds and stones along a particular strip. All the contractor's works have been done now.

Ellisons were instructed to produce a new lease for the community centre.

The clerk has not yet contacted the landowner about putting a seat into the Budgens bus shelter.

Two planters have been put onto North Green to stop cars driving from the green onto Church Road.

**25/152 Public Speaking**

None.

**25/153 County Councillor report.**

Cllr Guglielmi (CG) reported that the consultation for the red lines at the Budgens junction ended on the 17<sup>th</sup> August and he has not heard of any objections. Schemes are usually done October time.

For the crossing it's a matter of scheduling the work.

CG is expecting the application for the Garden Community to come in October/November time. The policy position hasn't changed. There is still a requirement for the funding of the link road to be in place before approval can be given.

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The hope is that because the A12 scheme has been pulled there may be some money for the link road but that hasn't been confirmed. The application will take a long time to decide, there will be several committee sittings, it will be broken down into different phases. He has asked for more meaningful engagement about the works that are going on. They have offered to do more engagement later in Autumn with more notice. CG has followed up on Cllr Gladwin's e-mail regarding safety concerns for the new A1331 roundabout.

CG has received a TRO (traffic restriction order) for School Road which he will forward to the clerk.

For the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) it's all gone very quiet. The submission will go in on the 26<sup>th</sup>. ECC are promoting the model for three unitary authorities in Essex. Tendring will be united with Colchester, Braintree and Uttlesford. There is also quite a lot of promotion for 5 unitary authorities, in which case we would only be with Colchester and Braintree. In the new arrangements there will be 4,500 – 5,000 residents per councillor. There are concerns about the disaggregation of services.

Cllr Brennan asked why the Colchester Road crossing can't be scheduled in.

CG doesn't know why they haven't done it, he has done everyone he can and is still pushing. Officers are not getting on with it, there is no news. CG suggests writing to Mr Blackburne-Maze at Highways.

**25/154 District Councillor report.**

Cllr Wiggins read through the report. This can be viewed at:

<https://www.elmsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk/meeting-reports>

Cllr Scott (GS) added that he went to see the dead trees at Pavilion View. He has asked TDC to take a look and also to look into the discarded materials on Church Road.

There was an application for 3 bungalows on Clacton Road. Residents have asked how the access will work, GS has asked TDC planning for more information.

There are a few things still to do at the refurbished play park on Old School Lane.

Parking on Bromley Road is still a problem. The layby on Bromley Road belongs to ECC.

NEPP has said it can do something but a scheme could take up to 12 months to be initiated.

Residents at Poundfield House have asked if the fence can be moved back and the grass area used for parking. Access would be an issue with parking in the layby. TDC housing are also looking into it.

Cllr Gladwin reported that vehicles are driving the wrong side of the keep left signs.

GS has had an e-mail from a resident about vandalism and minor crime. He passed this onto the community safety liaison officer for TDC who has a direct link with the police. The police are aware and doing patrols.

Someone is moving cones and blocking the road. The cones by the gateway access to Charity Field are also being moved.

Cllr Gladwin reported that when the A133 was shut traffic was being sent down past Birds Farm Road and large vehicles were hitting branches and he had to go and retrieve branches from the road. It would be good to have someone to contact directly when things like this happen. Cllr Gladwin will send this information to CG.

GS reported that there have been complaints about the diversions and the cabinet member is aware.

GS has had complaints about dog bins not being emptied but is not sure where they are.

Cllr Gladwin reported that we put a new one in on Church Road by the cricket club and it has missed a few collections.

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**25/155 Colne School bus stop.**

*Parents of Colne School students have raised concerns regarding the change of location for the bus stop to the Clacton Road car park and have requested help in reinstating the Budgens stop as the main stop.*

Residents have been unable to get a response from the bus company Stephenson's of Essex regarding their concerns, and it is not known why the change has been made. CG requested that we write to him about the issues and check with parents for specific problems as they happen.

The problems are that there is no shelter, no crossing, no proper pavement and no lighting. This will get worse as the weather gets worse and it gets darker.

It was resolved to write a letter to Stephenson's and put it out publicly. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Sanders, all in favour.

**25/156 New Community Centre and Open Space land.**

*i) A report from the committee meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> August 2025.*

The colour of the windows was raised again. The committee asks the council for justification as to why the change was made from white to grey. They have also asked for the architects to meet with the committee to answer their questions. There were questions in the meeting about whether the documents that had been circulated were the actual tender documents. Cllr Hare said that they didn't look like tender documents to him with his experience of pricing for building contracts.

For the windows committee members attending the relevant PC meeting recommended that they be white as all the buildings over there have white windows. After the meeting where that was agreed it was pointed out that not all the houses have white windows. The more comparable buildings with similar features to the new community centre (those buildings with the same colour brick and roof) have anthracite windows, as does the school that faces the development. We asked the architect and they suggested that the most straightforward way to avoid planning conflict was to keep the community centre similar to comparable buildings. The council decided at its next meeting to follow the professional recommendation.

For the requested meeting, there are still a couple of queries for Cllr Gladwin to send to the architect and once we've settled those we can then discuss meetings going forwards.

*ii) The tender documents have been received and circulated. Any comments? Can they be approved for use?*

There were a lot of documents but it's not the entirety. We need to add an introduction. We'll ask DCB to help with that. All the technical information is there.

Cllr Sanders raised that it looks like decisions have been made which he wasn't aware had been decided, such as the type of heating system. Also the specification looks too high.

We have questions on this because some items are costed at the high end. We'll need to bring the cost down, do we do that now or as part of the value engineering after the tender?

We'll ask DCB for a meeting to ask these questions and about the next step.

There are tweaks to be made. As not all councillors had had the opportunity to go through the details a decision on whether to approve the tender documents was held over until October.

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*iii) Decision matrix for the tender.*

Before we put the tender out we have to decide how the decision will be made. We don't have to publicise the full matrix with the tender but we do have to include an explanation of the criteria against which the award of the contract will be assessed. Cllr Sanders may have an example we can use.

*iv) Funding.*

An updated summary was not available yet.

*v) Any other updates.*

There have been 125 responses on the survey so far. There are still some flyers to deliver. The clerk will put a mid-way reminder of the survey on Facebook.

**25/157 Charity Field.**

*i) To discuss options to improve the security of the entrance gate.*

Cllr Gladwin and the handyman fixed the gate but it has broken again. A resident is concerned about access through the gate. We have looked at a vertical swinging barrier which is expensive, and most of them only lock with a padlock which is as vulnerable as anything else. The entrance is only temporary. Once the field no longer needs cutting we could put a physical barrier over the entrance. Cllr Gladwin will speak to some local farmers.

*ii) To discuss options to improve the security of access from Vaughan Drive.*

There is a flimsy fence along the stretch that doesn't have the swale. Could we plant a hedge? This will be the main entrance so no. There isn't room for a hedge where you have the fence and ditch. Options were discussed and as we'll need some new topsoil we could make a temporary mini bund. The clerk is to get a quote for 10 x 1 tonne bags of topsoil. One could go in front of the entrance gate.

*iii) To consider what to do about fly tipping in the drainage ditch (green waste).*

It is likely to be a nearby resident. Could we put a notice up? There is quite a length of ditch. Could we put flyers through doors? People may not understand what the ditch is for. We'll leave it for now and see if it happens again.

*iv) To consider usage of the field and how to limit usage to approved usage. To consider signage.*

There has been more than one BBQ and a bouncy castle on the field. The grass is very dry which is not good for BBQs. It's open space for the whole village, not just the adjacent residents. There is a liability/insurance issue. It's not "public land", it's Parish Council owned land being used by the public. TDC planning advised us that we should put notices up to say that it is owned by the PC. We need some signage to say what people can and can't do. We may need to move them once the entrance is built. The clerk will ask Lawford PC what is on their signage. CG will send the clerk a photo. CG advised that we draft policies and direct people to those policies.

Cllr Guglielmi left the meeting.

*v) To consider changing the surface of the pathway.*

We've done a lot of work on the grass but now we have a gravel pathway with cheap wood sides that are rotting away spreading gravel over the grass. We've previously discussed changing the surface to something that is easier to walk on, pushchair and wheelchair

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accessible and doesn't get waterlogged. Could we put something like asphalt over it and use the gravel as a foundation? To get quotes and ideas on surface options from landscaping/driveway companies.

**25/158 Allotments.**

- i) *The transfer documents have been received and circulated. Any comments? Can they be approved for completion?*

The clerk has circulated the documents with her own comments. There were no other comments. The transfer document currently states that no structure is to be erected within 3m of the Easement Zone. Will this cause an issue for putting fencing up? It was also asked what type of fencing. The working party can discuss this.

They've added right of access by foot over common areas, so will be able to access from Elmcroft car park and via other yellow areas but removed right of way for vehicles and any right of way on the Estate Road, which was going to be adopted by ECC Highways. Is that road adoption not happening now? Cllr Sanders responded that it hasn't happened and a private road sign has been installed.

Is the PC happy with these rights of access? Allotment holders wouldn't be able to use the visitors' car parking, they would need to park in Elmcroft car park and walk through. The area by the visitors' car park could be fenced off. It was suggested previously that not using the visitors' car park would be better as otherwise we'll have to start sharing in the maintenance costs of it and the access road. If people are going to need vehicular access we'll need to install gates. A redesign of the access, fencing and pathways needs to be considered.

What about accessibility if having to access from Elmcroft? There are usually a few spaces in that car park, which is owned by the Parish Council. We still have to install a ramp, it's on the handyman's work list.

The ground is supposed to be finished topsoil, but there are still bricks. Does the council wish to insist the developer cuts the weeds and grades the soil? The Deed of Variation states that the developer cannot allow occupation of the last dwelling until the allotments are done in accordance with the specification. We'd need to ask enforcement.

It was resolved to write to Mr Newell saying that we are unable to complete the land transfer until the allotments are in the correct state, giving a 7 day period for a response. To also write to TDC enforcement to let them know that we have done that and saying that if we haven't heard in 7 days can they enforce it? Proposed: Cllr Sanders, Seconded: Cllr Gladwin, all in favour.

Cllr Brennan has a contact who can look at the allotments and give us some advice. She will send his contact details to the clerk.

- ii) *To discuss what works to the allotments are a priority once transfer is complete. There is £4,506 s106 funding to spend on appropriate fencing, gates, locks and keys, a standpipe and troughs, and landscaping for the plots and walkways.*

The working party will meet to discuss this.

- iii) *To consider membership of the working party.*

Current membership is Cllrs Richfield, Jeggo, Brennan and Ward. It was resolved for Cllr Brennan to leave the working party and for Cllr Sanders to join.

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

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**25/159 Finance.**

i) *To look through the finance report and approve payments. See appendix 1.*  
The finance report was approved. Proposed: Cllr Sanders, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

ii) *An update on banking (accounts and deposits).*  
It was agreed to renew the Unity 6 month deposit account for another 6 months.

**25/160 Council website and e-mail addresses**

*Assertion 10 of the 2025/26 AGAR will require that the authority must have an e-mail account hosted on an authority owned domain for example [clerk@abcparishcouncil.gov](mailto:clerk@abcparishcouncil.gov) or [clerk@abcparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@abcparishcouncil.org.uk) rather than [abcparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:abcparishclerk@gmail.com).*

*This will require the council website moving to a .gov domain for example. The cost of the domain from our current website provider is £192 for 10 years plus £25 set up fee before VAT. They suggest [elmsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://elmsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk). The cost of the clerk e-mail is £55/year plus a £30 set up fee (10GB storage). They suggest [clerk@elmsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@elmsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk). For councillors to also have .gov e-mail addresses the cost is a £5 set up fee and a £4 annual fee per councillor.*

It was resolved to move the website to a .gov domain and for the clerk and chairman to have their own .gov.uk e-mail addresses. Proposed: Cllr Sanders, Seconded: Cllr Gladwin, all in favour.

**25/161 Playing Field**

*To consider the use of the field for the 2025/26 football season by youth teams.*

We have been told by ECC not to allow use until an agreement is in place. We don't know how long this will take or how much extra it will cost. We had a list of questions for a football team so we could send them to Wivenhoe United who have expressed an interest in using the field. Representatives who were present said that the timing would not work for them, their season starts in two weeks. They need to be able to plan long term. We'll stay in touch with them.

The clerk did ask LSH if we're not charging a team do we still need an agreement but didn't get a clear answer. We would need a legal agreement anyway to cover the conditions of use.

**25/162 Events**

i) *Wednesday hub – an update on the food hygiene training. Advertising needs to be updated to reflect our new funding partner, Galloper Wind Farm Community Fund. Any other updates?*

Cllr Richfield reported that she and one of the other volunteers have done both training sessions and one has done one and is still to finish the allergy awareness training.

The clerk is to send the hub poster to Cllr Sanders to update for our current funding partner and to improve the accessibility of the text. Cllr Richfield will send some text.

ii) *Halloween.*

Cllr Jeggo reported that all the stalls are in place, we will be having a working party meeting soon.

iii) *Any other event updates?*

The working party will also be planning the Christmas event.

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**25/163 Additional councillors required.**

*To discuss how to find new councillors.*

We need additional councillors as our council is already stretched too far. It is difficult to take on any additional projects.

There were 80 people on the new community centre survey who said they were happy to receive PC communications, we could contact them.

Cllr Brennan will put a poster together and Cllr Gladwin will put some wording together for a FB post about what the council has done and what we could do more of if people were interested in getting involved Cllr Brennan suggested a noticeboard at Lanswood.

**25/164 Items for the next agenda or for information only.**

Colchester Road crossing.

**25/165 Date of next meeting.**

2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

There being no further business councillors were thanked for their attendance.

Minutes written by Mrs. A Baxter.