

**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026**  
**Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council**  
**Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET**

Present: Cllrs Adam Gladwin (Chairman), Amanda Brennan, Maxine Jeggo, Tony Sanders  
Martine Ward.

Also Present: Mrs Baxter (clerk).

District Councillors: Gary Scott and Ann Wiggins.

County Councillor: Carlo Guglielmi

Absent: Cllrs James Chable, Michael Hare and Liz Richfield.

**26/021 Chairman's welcome and notifications.**

Cllr Gladwin informed everyone that we were having technical issues and we would be unable to use the overhead projector and screen.

**26/022 Apologies for Absence.**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Chable and Hare.

**26/023 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests.**

None.

**26/024 Approval and signing of the minutes from 8<sup>th</sup> January 2026.**

It was resolved to accept the minutes from 8<sup>th</sup> January 2026 as true and accurate.

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

**26/025 To receive an update about the progress of resolutions from the meeting above not covered in this agenda.**

The clerk updated that she had circulated some wording to share with the public regarding the increase in the budget and precept. Nobody had any objections to the wording.

**26/026 Public Speaking**

None.

**26/027 County Councillor report.**

Cllr Guglielmi reported the good news that the Colchester Road crossing has finally been approved for works to start on the 6<sup>th</sup> April. The road closure is for 6 weeks but it won't take that long. They have not heard back from UK Power Networks, but that is not unusual. Hopefully it will be completed before the elections.

The elections will take place in May. Purdah begins at the end of March.

Elmstead will be in the Brightlingsea division which follows from the review of the boundary commission done in 2024. We will therefore have a different County Councillor. This will be for one year and in 2027 there will be elections for the shadow Unitary. We'll have elected members and elected shadow members for a year and then it will be the Unitary council from 2028. We could have the same member and shadow member.

The number of residents currently in Cllr Guglielmi's division is 17,000, with the new boundaries it will be between 14,000 and 15,000. The new division under the Unitary Council is thought to be between 4,000 and 5,000 but it will be the combined workload of District and County Council.

A decision should be made public by the end of February/beginning of March on the Unitary divisions in Essex.

The Tendring Colchester Garden Community Committee met on the 26<sup>th</sup> January. It's fairly certain that £65 million for the second phase of the link road will be passed over from government. A new memorandum of understanding has been prepared by Latimer which all 3 councils should sign in the next few days which cements an additional £21 million from Latimer if needed. If it's not needed it will be recycled back into the benefit for the Garden Community. The contract will go out to tender in Autumn once the funding is in place.

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The committee also discussed a scheme of delegation for officers to determine planning applications for the Garden Community.  
The consultation on the Local Plan will start on Monday for 6 weeks.

**26/028 District Councillor report.**

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

The Local Plan preferred options consultation starts on 9<sup>th</sup> February. This shows how the LP will deliver 1,063 houses per year over the life of the plan. Elmstead Parish has no allocation, excluding the Garden Community. The results of the consultation will go back to the Local Plan Policy Committee. There will then be a final consultation after which it goes to the Secretary of State with the hope it is approved by spring 2027. This LP could be transferred to the new Unitary Authority or the UA could update it.

Regarding the possibly inappropriate use of the Clacton Road car park which is full of cars it has been reported to officers to look into and there may be signage going up.

Cllr Brennan reported that the road into the wooded area by the bridge on Alresford Road is flooding very badly because the drain is blocked. Cllr Scott responded that Network Rail are responsible and he will report it to them and report back next month.

Alresford Parish Council are trying to reinstate the bus stop at Marsh Farm, 20 – 30m from the brick bridge, within a short distance of the Elmstead Parish border.

Cllr Gladwin raised that the traffic island on Bromley Road needs fixing. There's a cone on it, which keeps getting knocked off and you can't see the island in the dark. Cllr Guglielmi asked for a photo. Cllr Gladwin will send one.

Cllr Guglielmi asked about the flooding on Church Road, as it wasn't long ago he got EH to come and fix it. It is still being reported that it's flooding.

Cllr Scott also reported that residents are keen to get red lines at the bottom of Church Road near the junction. People are parking really close to the crossroads which is causing a bottleneck. Cllr Gladwin also raised that it's really dark along that section, and there is a section of pavement where it isn't wide enough for a wide pram or wheelchair

Cllr Guglielmi explained that TDC only has six TROs for the whole district for one year. We can lump some issues together. They will need evidence and examples of why it's needed. Cllr Scott raised Budgens delivery lorries parking on School Road, but that is the official loading bay.

Cllr Guglielmi said that the potholes we sent him have been scheduled in.

There is a Local Plan exhibition in Brightlingsea from 3pm to 7pm on the 26<sup>th</sup> February.

There will also be one in Weeley, to be confirmed.

**26/029 Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community**

*i) An update from the joint committee meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026.*

Cllr Gladwin reported that the two main discussion points were the funding for the link road, which Cllr Guglielmi has already spoken about, and delegation of authority. This will be for officers to decide applications for certain sized applications. We'll be able to call these applications in through a member, in the same way we do with Tendring planning.

*ii) To discuss a press statement.*

Cllr Gladwin proposed an update to be posted on social media. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

Cllr Gladwin will draft and circulate a statement.

*iii) To discuss a letter to the planning officers of both Local Authorities regarding delegated decisions.*

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Cllr Gladwin proposed to send a letter to start a conversation and set up a way for us to have good communications with the officers for the smaller applications that come in.  
Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.  
Cllr Gladwin will draft and circulate a letter.

**26/030 TDC Local Plan**

*To consider Mr Guiver's e-mail update of 21<sup>st</sup> January and the arrangement of a meeting to discuss the emerging proposals.*

Mr Guiver has previously said he's keen to get feedback from us on the business park north of the A120 at Collierswood. The clerk is to request an in person meeting with Mr Guiver.

**26/031 National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system. Consultation closes 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026.**

*Does the council wish to respond and how would that be achieved?*

It will be difficult to put together a council response. The advice from O'Neill Homer is to engage with the consultation but focus on what it is we use to respond to planning applications and see if that will be affected by the changes.

The clerk will see if she can circulate the questions and the planning committee will review them.

**26/032 Estates**

*i) Allotments. Any updates?*

Cllr Sanders reported that we now have permission from Anglian Water to put the fencing up around the edge of the allotments.

We have the contact details of someone who can advise us on allotments.

There is nothing stopping us signing the transfer documents other than getting Newell's to resurface the land. There are still bricks in the ground.

We need to go ahead with the transfer in order for TDC to follow up on their checks that the allotment specification has been complied with.

The allotments working party needs to get together and discuss what to do next.

*ii) Dene Park. To discuss the occupation and use of the land by Cadent and an offer of a donation.*

Cadent has offered £500 of compensation. There's been a big container there and the ground will need to be reseeded.

It was agreed that we would accept, with the condition that they reinstate the land when they leave and let us know when they are leaving.

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

*iii) North Green. An update on a replacement tree.*

The clerk has spoken to the landowner who suggests that there is room for two trees. He advises not to plant semi mature trees, with all the trees he has planted the small whips are now towering over the bigger trees that have barely grown. The council had suggested replacing the tree like for like, which would be a horse chestnut but he suggests that with climate change concerns we look for species that are heat and waterlogging tolerant. He will discuss the locations when we're ready.

The clerk has looked at the RHS website and there seems to be only one tree that is drought and waterlogging tolerant.

The Pride of India looks pretty and is drought tolerant.

It was suggested that we could have sponsored remembrance trees with plaques on.

The clerk will try to speak to someone for advice.

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We'll need to put some protection around it. The clerk will ask the handyman about the spare cage from Elmcroft.

**26/033 Events**

*i) Wednesday hub.*

Cllr Ward updated that it's going well and there are lots of attendees.

*ii) Any other event updates?*

We don't have the time to prepare for an easter event.

**26/034 Finance.**

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

The finance report was approved. Proposed: Cllr Sanders, Seconded: Cllr Gladwin, all in favour.

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

The clerk highlighted the annual interest payment from Hampshire Trust Bank. The interest rates at Unity and Redwood have decreased.

*iii) To consider alternatives to the Equals pre-paid cards due to a monthly fee now being charged.*

The clerk went through several options. Equals is now £300/year. There's a Barclaycard charge card with an annual £42 fee or a Barclaycard with no fees. There's Pockit pay as you go cards with a range of pricing but there's no overview. There's a Unity Corporate Purchasing card with a central overview with a £108 annual fee.

It was agreed that a Barclaycard account be set up with cards for the clerk, handyman and the Wednesday Hub. It will be set up with a direct debit to pay the full amount of the balance each month. The clerk will set the following monthly limits; hub £400, handyman £400, clerk £1,000.

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

**26/035 Internal Audit 2025/26**

*To consider appointing Mrs Jan Stobart for the 2025/26 internal audit.*

It was resolved to appoint Mrs Stobart and confirmed that she is still independent and competent to do the audit.

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

**26/036 Charity Field**

*i) A discussion of the flooding on the field and potential solutions to improve the drainage.*

The flooding is getting worse and we need to do something if we want to use the field. Cllr Gladwin suggested that when we have the building contractor with all their machinery on the site for the new community centre they install 3-4 land drains. We can also plant more trees to help.

*ii) To discuss a broken tree on the field.*

The clerk is to check Go Homes obligations. The broken tree has been removed. The clerk is to send an e-mail to Cllrs Scott and Wiggins and they will ask Mr Guiver to check the conditions.

*iii) Any update on a policy and signage for use of the field.*

Signature .....

Date .....

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Cllr Sanders has found an example of a pictogram for signage. It is colour coded. He will send it to the clerk.

iv) *Any update on the use of CCTV for the playing field.*

There are cameras on sale at the moment. Cllr Gladwin will speak to the clerk.

v) *Any update on the rock filled gabion baskets to stop vehicles being able to drive onto the field.*

The clerk has contacted the vendor with a question about them being delivered onto the playing field. She has not heard back yet. Silverton also sells rocks.

**26/037 New Community Centre and Open Space land.**

i) *A general update on the tender process.*

Cllr Gladwin reported that the process is going well. We are down to the final three who have sent the value engineering figures to us today.

ii) *Any update on the Lanswood deed of variation. Does the council agree to pay TDC's solicitor's costs?*

The solicitor will do the work on the deed once we've paid the fee of £1,375. We have two reserves that we could pay it out of; a legal fees reserve with just under £5,500 and a new community centre reserve (separate to the s106 funds) with £6,400.

It was resolved to pay for the legal fees from the new community centre reserve.

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

iii) *To discuss timing for meetings for upcoming decisions.*

Once we've agreed a favoured applicant, we'll have a meeting with them to discuss the value engineering in more detail. The committee would like to discuss the decision before the PC makes the final decision, so we need to fit in a committee meeting. We need to make a final decision before the end of February, so we'll need an extra ordinary meeting. The clerk is to check if the hall is free on the 23<sup>rd</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> February.

iv) *Biodiversity net gain planning condition.*

Our architect is trying to find us another ecologist to do the work but it isn't easy. We can ask our preferred contractor if they know of anyone. We need to provide additional information so will need to appoint an ecologist. The building work can't start until the condition is approved. The clerk asked Cllr Guglielmi if once we have the scheme approved do we also need to complete the s106 before we can start. Cllr Guglielmi responded no, we can start when the scheme is approved. He will check if he has any ecologist recommendations he can send to us.

The clerk will send the BNG documents to Cllr Sanders.

Cllr Gladwin spoke to Latimer and got the impression that whilst their planning is pending they don't want to get involved with our BNG. We need someone independent to represent us.

v) *Funding.*

The interest is increasing the balance. We have submitted a grant application to the lottery for £493k. It will be a few months until we hear back. The clerk did let the lottery know that we are going through value engineering so that figure is likely to come down. When we know with more certainty we can contact them to update them.

vi) *Any other updates.*

None.

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**26/038 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.**

The above was resolved. Proposed: Cllr Ward, Seconded: Cllr Gladwin, all in favour.

Members of public left the meeting.

**26/039 New Community Centre.**

*i) A more detailed update on the tender process.*

Cllr Gladwin reported that we met with the 3 highest scoring tenderers. They were all impressive. We asked them all exactly the same questions to keep it fair. One of the discussion points was on value engineering (VE) and they all suggested ways we could cut costs. Our QS made notes on all the VE points and sent a list to all of them after the meeting so that they could price the savings. They all brought the price down significantly. One of the tenderers was willing to be flexible on payment timings. One of the tenderers offered a part exchange for the current community centre against the cost of building the new. It was less than half our valuation though. It would solve the problem of extracting value from the community centre to pay for the new one, before the old one can be sold. However even if we had to get a bridging loan secured on the community centre the interest is likely to be less than what we could lose on the value if we part exchanged. There is other interest from Market Field School. We could look into an option for them to purchase it and then lease it back to us until the new one is ready. We should also consider what it would cost us to get outline planning on the site and how much that would increase the value. The site is in a special location in the village centre. We need to carefully consider the options. It was asked if the site is on the council's name. It wasn't registered on land registry but our solicitor has applied for it to be registered to us. The clerk is to check if this has been completed. Another of the big discussions was to do with phasing. They were all happy with the idea. Phase 1 would be to get the building up and weathertight for the amount we have in the bank. TDC has signed off on us using a £200,000 s106 fund for the changing rooms, but we are waiting to find out if we can invoice for the full amount now or whether we have to request it as we go along. If we are using that then we have just over £1m that we can commit to phase 1. Phase 2 is the car park and everything connected that we can use the Lanswood s106 fund for. This can happen concurrently with phase 1 once we have the agreement from TDC. Phase 3 would be the solar panels, EV and other items we could make grant applications for. Also the fitting out. The community centre charity has some funds they can spend on the furnishings from the fundraising that EMCHAT did.

*ii) To discuss how to proceed; how many and which tenderers to continue value engineering with.*

All three tenderers are viable. It was discussed how long the builders have been in business for, and how quickly they are growing. They are all fairly local. The council viewed the prices after reduction for VE. Two of them were not far apart and one was a lot higher. The council went into further detail discussing the two lowest priced tenderers covering their relevant industry experience, their original matrix scores and their approach to the meeting and VE. They both have worked with and have a good working relationship with our architect. One is more local, being located in the Parish. That one is also the lowest priced.

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We need to go through what can be done with what we have available for Phase 1. We will need to speak to the contractor about it. We also need to speak to our QS about what we can leave to Phase 2 and the building still be watertight. If the changing rooms are in Phase 2 then that is less funding for Phase 1. A lot of the costs for those are in the heating and water storage costs.

One of the VE suggestions is to keep the excavated soil on the field instead of having to remove it. If we use the open spaces s106 money towards a land drain they will be digging the field up, we can ask them to sift the soil and then put it back over the top of the dug up area to get rid of some of the soil there. We could put some more down the far end to build up a bund to put the hedge on and it would help to stop the flooding into Pauls Crescent. It was resolved that Lexden Contracts are the preferred contractor, subject to whether we can make the phasing work. This is the lowest priced after VE.

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

The clerk will let the 3<sup>rd</sup> placed tenderer that we won't be going forwards with them. The clerk will speak to DCB about the 2<sup>nd</sup> place tenderer.

iii) *Next steps.*

None.

**26/040 Items for the next agenda or for information only.**

None.

**26/041 Date of next meeting**

*5<sup>th</sup> March 2026.*

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

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

Minutes written by Mrs. A Baxter.