

**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2026**  
**Meeting of Elmstead Parish Council**  
**Community Centre, School Road, Elmstead Market, CO7 7ET**

Present: Cllrs Adam Gladwin (Chairman), Amanda Brennan, Maxine Jeggo and Michael Hare.

Also Present: Mrs Baxter (clerk).

District Councillors: Gary Scott and Ann Wiggins.

Absent: Cllrs James Chable, Liz Richfield, Tony Sanders and Martine Ward.

- 26/001 Chairman's welcome and notifications.**  
Cllr Gladwin welcomed everybody.
- 26/002 Apologies for Absence.**  
Apologies were received from Cllrs James Chable, Liz Richfield, Tony Sanders and Martine Ward. Apologies were also received from County Councillor Guglielmi.
- 26/003 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Personal Interests.**  
None.
- 26/004 Approval and signing of the minutes from 4<sup>th</sup> December 2025.**  
It was resolved to accept the minutes from 4<sup>th</sup> December 2025 as true and accurate.  
Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Jeggo, all in favour.
- 26/005 To receive an update about the progress of resolutions from the meeting above not covered in this agenda.**  
The clerk contacted Cllr Guglielmi about the red lines at the Budgens junction, which have now been installed, but needs to follow up on what can be done about parking on pavements around the village.  
The blocked drain on Church Road has been cleared.  
The clerk did contact Cadent about the portacabin on Dene Park but the e-mail has been passed around and nobody has responded. Cllrs updated that it is still there and has been there since September. They will take photos. It will damage the grass. The last time they were there they left machinery in the grass which damaged our contractor's mower and we had to claim the cost of that back. The clerk will chase Cadent.
- 26/006 Public Speaking**  
None
- 26/007 County Councillor report.**  
This has been circulated. This can be viewed at <https://www.elmsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk/meeting-reports>  
Cllr Guglielmi has been sending us updates. The Church Road flooding is fixed. He has escalated a pothole in Lucerne. The potholes down Church Road have been added to his pothole scheme list. The clerk asked him to add the broken drain and pothole on Hatchcroft Gardens and that was fixed today.  
Cllr Scott asked us to add the traffic islands on Bromley Road, where the safety barrier keep left signs are missing.
- 26/008 District Councillor report.**  
There was no written report this month as there was little to report. A resident has contacted them as they think they are in the wrong council tax band. Some residents are trying to get re-banded.  
The meeting Cllr Scott organised between PC councillors and TDC was held and he hopes that was useful.  
Cllr Scott has visited new residents.

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Cllr Scott attended a Local Plan and Policy meeting. They have identified pockets of growth for the LP.

There will be a garden village of 4,500 between Hare Green and Frating built over a 45 year period. The proposal for Elmstead is to have a zero allocation. For Alresford it's between 140 and 300. Tendring has to build 1,063 houses every year until 2042.

Cllr Scott is not sure what happens to the Local Plan when the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) is completed. There's a Local Plan and Policy meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

Cllr Scott will report that the bottle banks opposite the community centre are full. The clerk updated that they came to empty them this morning but only emptied one of four. Cllr Scott will report the others.

The LGR consultation finishes on the 11<sup>th</sup> January and there will be a decision before the end of March. Cllr Scott's preference is to have 5 unitary authorities. Cllr Gladwin reported that it was considered as an agenda item but agreeing answers to all the questions as a council would be difficult. Cllr Gladwin encouraged Cllrs to complete the consultation themselves.

Cllr Scott doesn't know if there will be elections or not this year, they may be postponed. Cllr Hare asked who will be running the new Unitary Councils. Cllr Scott responded that there will be shadow elections for councillors for the new council, which will take on all the responsibilities of TDC and ECC.

**26/009 Charity Field**

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

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

There have been no more vehicles on the field. A week ago the field was frozen solid, so understandably the resident responsible has not been able to repair the damage. The handyman has reported that the resident will buy topsoil to fill the holes in spring. After it's been mown a few times it should be flat.

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

Cllr Gladwin has started a list of restrictions but hasn't been able to find any good examples of signs. We have received a complaint that there were fireworks on there over new year.

Cllr Brennan has written a letter to send to Victory Fields' residents and other houses that border the field and the council reviewed it. Cllr Brennan will help the clerk to deliver the letters.

Cllr Hare asked if we insure the field. We do but if an event such as a firework display is held on the field without the council's permission it won't be insured because we won't have been able to do a risk assessment and consider the health and safety issues. These types of events are a big insurance risk.

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

It should be possible to use the Community Centre Wi-Fi to view just the field. We need to set up privacy zones so that we are only viewing our property. It won't be too expensive. Cllr Gladwin will look for cameras and we'll need to put together a CCTV policy.

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

Cllrs Gladwin and Sanders have been discussing the specification and agreed that it would be better to get a thicker gauge, to get 1m x 1m x 0.5m dimensions and that we

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need 5. This will cost £188 for the baskets. Two bags of stones of 850 – 900kgs is about £280. Our handyman won't be able to fill them by himself. We'll need a working party, and a lorry with a swinging arm to deliver it onto the field without driving onto it. We might be able to claim it from the s106 open spaces fund. The clerk will check. The above specifications and purchases were agreed. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Jeggo, all in favour.

**26/010 Community Centre car park**

*Any updates to improvements required.*

Cllr Chable has been in contact with the clerk regarding the contractor doing the works to Market Field School. The contractor has taken photos of the car park and will repair it when he finishes the school works and the council won't have to pay. The clerk responded to Cllr Chable asking about the sharing of costs for defects that were there before works started. The clerk will follow up.

The handyman has been covering it with salt so that it isn't icy.

**26/011 Allotments.**

*Any updates?*

Cllr Sanders is chasing the water company contact in order to request permission to erect the fence within 3m of the easement zone. He's waiting to hear back.

**26/012 Finance.**

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

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

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

Council reviewed the balances. Interest rates are likely to come down. The Unity 6 month account is a fixed rate. The clerk highlighted that Equals has started charging a £25 monthly fee. The clerk will find an alternative which is a shame because the cards worked so well. The clerk hasn't found any other free options. There is one that is complicated. There are pre-paid cards you can get from the post office that are free.

Cllr Hare asked what happens to the interest on the s106 deposits. It gets added to the funds and will be spent on the new community centre.

Cllr Scott recommended a bank account with a good interest rate at Saffron Walden Building Society.

**26/013 2026/27 Budget and Precept.**

*To hear from the finance committee regarding the 2026/27 budget and the amount of precept to set for 2026/27. To agree a budget and precept for 2026/27.*

A budget has been prepared and circulated. A ready reckoner calculation shows what precept is required to meet the budgeted net expenditure. Other options were also prepared as there is a need to increase the general reserve and start saving for the Neighbourhood Plan review. With no increase for these the council tax increase would be 4% equivalent to £4/year for a band D property. The rate of inflation used for the budget was 4.1% but that was only for items where more exact figures weren't used.

If it was a 6% increase that would give an additional £880. We do need to save for the Neighbourhood Plan because there are no government grants available any more and it looks as if it will be fairly expensive looking at the estimate of costs O'Neill Homer sent through. The council reviewed those. We will need to weigh up the benefits of the NP. It has helped restrict planning so far.

An increase of 7% was reviewed, this would raise an additional £1,660 and be equivalent to an extra £5.63/year for a band D property.

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It was discussed that although the percentage increase looks high the annual increase is not.

It was resolved to approve a 2026/27 precept request of £87,805 which is a 7% increase on 2025/26. Proposed: Cllr Brennan, Seconded: Cllr Gladwin, all in favour.

It was resolved to add a £1,000 Neighbourhood Plan reserve and £660 to increase the general reserve. Proposed: Cllr Gladwin, Seconded: Cllr Brennan, all in favour.

An explanation of the reasons for the increase will be published.

It was resolved to agree the budget for 2026/27 with the additions above. This budget shows budgeted expenditure of £88,826.72, budgeted income of £1,682.04 and an additional budget of £660 to increase the general reserve. The net is £87,804.68.

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

A Finance Committee meeting is needed to review the third quarter 2025/26.

**26/014 Events**

*i) Wednesday hub.*

There were no hub councillors to give an update.

*ii) Easter.*

This hasn't been looked into yet.

*iii) Any other event updates?*

We won't be doing a Halloween event next year.

**26/015 Replacement tree for North Green.**

Residents have been asking about replacing the tree which was cut down on the North Green. It would be best to plant it late February/March. The landowner would like input into the type of tree. The clerk will check what type of tree was lost and the suggestion is to replace it with the same type at about 5-6 feet. We need to decide where it will go.

Cllr Scott recommended a garden centre in Dedham which has mature trees.

The clerk will contact the landowner and ask for a contribution to the cost.

**26/016 New Community Centre and Open Space land.**

*i) To hear back from a meeting at TDC held on 16th December 2025.*

Cllrs Gladwin and Sanders, Mrs Baxter, Cllrs Wiggins and Scott, Mr Guiver and Mr Pateman-Gee attended. It was a productive meeting. We were told that agreement for the £200k s106 funds for the changing rooms is with the finance manager for final sign off. We were told that as soon it's agreed we can claim it.

For the Lanswood deed of variation TDC can open the old case rather than start again.

We were told that Lanswood needs to send an e-mail to TDC to ask them to re-open the case and supply the required wording. The clerk has drafted a letter to Lanswood. Cllr Gladwin and Sanders will review it.

For the biodiversity net gain Mr Pateman-Gee told us that it wasn't a major development because it's under 1,000m<sup>2</sup>. He also said that if we change our ratio of trees, hedges and grassland so that it was less than specified levels we wouldn't need a s106 agreement and there wouldn't be the same monitoring requirement, but we would need someone to redo our landscape plan.

This would be simpler and cheaper for us and take the pressure off TDC. He signposted us to where we can see what is missing from our BNG submission,

Mr Guiver updated that they expect the Latimer application early in the new year. They are ready to submit, but they are in discussion with the government about funding and they are waiting for more funding for the link road.

For the Local Plan the committee has agreed the housing sites. Mr Guiver told us about a business development the other side of the A120. It will be of regional significance but

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can't happen unless the link road junction is completed and it will complement the garden community business park.

*ii) Any update on the deed of variation.*

It was added to the above that in an old e-mail from TDC legal we were told that we need the developer's permission for a deed of variation because it was within 5 years of the contribution date. We are nearly out of that 5 year period so the clerk will contact TDC legal to clarify what that means.

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

We may be able to decide on a tenderer in the February meeting.

*iv) Biodiversity net gain planning condition.*

In addition to the above we will speak to our architect. Our BNG consultant did work for us that didn't meet the requirements.

*v) Any other updates.*

The quantity surveyor has been speaking to the top 3 tenderers and putting together a report which will level out the prices. We hope to then meet them next week.

**26/017 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.**

This was not needed.

**26/018 New Community Centre.**

*An update on the tenders.*

Nothing to add.

**26/019 Items for the next agenda or for information only.**

None.

**26/020 Date of next meeting**

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

The meeting closed at 8.13pm.

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

Minutes written by Mrs. A Baxter.