



Elsenham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in The Memorial Hall at 7.45pm on 8 April 2024

Members of Elsenham Parish Council (EPC) present:

Cllr. G Mott (Chairman GM), Cllr. B Donald (Vice-Chair BD) Cllr. B Burlton (BB),
Cllr. P Davis (PD), Cllr. R Franklin (RF), Cllr. P Jarvis (PJ),
Cllr. F Lambert (FL), Cllr. J Minor (JM), Cllr. A Mowbray (AM),
Cllr. S Waite (SW) and Mrs. L Johnson (Parish Clerk – LJ).

Members of the public present:

3 plus Essex County Cllr. R Gooding (RG) and District Cllr. P Lees.

Apologies for absence:

Cllr. G Bentley (GB).

Declarations of Interest: BD declared an interest on number 24 on the agenda, BD husband has submitted a quote for the repairs to the taps on the allotments.
BB declared an interest on number 10 on the agenda, BB lives in one of the adjacent properties to the proposed position of the outdoor gym.

Open to the public:

There were no questions from the public.

Closed to the public.

22781. Actions from previous minutes – None.

22782. Minutes.

The Council considered the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2024 GM signed the minutes as a true record.

22783. District Councillors' Reports.

BD co-chaired a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on Operational Resilient, investigating the failing of UDC to supply one of their fundamental services to collect household and industrial waste bins, which lasted several weeks. The Group looked at what went wrong and the cost to the taxpayer. The District Council apologies for the disruption of the services. UDC worked long and hard to resolve the problem. UDC are extremely grateful to Braintree District Council, as well as Widdington Recycling who helped them with collections during this period.

The Scrutiny Group found failings in management, staff resigning and not being replaced in an acceptable time frame and one person having complete control with no back up system in place. Many councillors have been with UDC for many years and had an in-depth knowledge of how systems work, UDC confessed they had not utilised this knowledge. Further delay was caused by the teams on the Braintree lorries not knowing the route, maps need to be added to Google.

UDC are now asking employees to flag up anything they see that is wrong within the organisation, these people will be commended.

The final approximate total to the taxpayer is £53,000.

JM asked do employees have to give 3 months' notice before leaving?
BD said this employee had departed very hastily.

Chirs Bush asked if the £53,000 includes the £19,000 ECC were giving to UDC. This is still taxpayers' money; will it be in the final figure?

PL replied that the final figure will be more than £53,000, but the £19,000 was included.

Chris Bush asked has the person responsible been identified and disciplined.
PL said the person has been identified and action will be taken, but their name will never be in the public domain.
Chris Bush replied that in business there would be some come back, people pay their taxes, and they should know who is responsible.

JM asked why a member of the UDC's refuse collection crew was not put on each lorry to help with the routes. What were these employees doing?

BD said some employees were doing training others were going ahead of the lorries to make sure residents had the correct bins out.
PL said that UDC's crews were not legally allowed on other district lorries.
UDC has one licence which covers all the refuse lorries.
The full report will be broadcast on 16 April 2024. The report will also be recorded in the minutes of the meeting which will be on UDC's website.

PL said the budget has been set and agreed for 2024/25. The budgets are all on UDC website. Total cost £18.4million. Grants asked for by people in need totalled £785,000 unfortunately, UDC only had £310,000 to give.

There is a Local Plan meeting next week, all is going to schedule.
Some people found several problems when accessing the information from the Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation. The Head of Planning said this was due to UDC using a different programme, that other people may not have.

The Fire and Police elections are taking place on 2 May 2024.

BD said she had been invited to Saffron Warden's Museum to view a new exhibition, "Plants: The Struggle for Survival". The museum is also struggling to survive, and it would be lovely if more people visited the museum.

RF said he had it on good authority that Affinity Water had said that the stream of water that has been running down Grove Hill for weeks is spring water and therefore ECC's responsibility. PL said she would contact RG.

A resident asked when the Local Plan would be finalised.
GM replied saying not until Summer 2026.

PL said that 18 parishes in the district had set up a petition regarding the numerous potholes on the roads. PL is to send the information to LJ; EPC will then decide whether to join or not.

22784. Planning Committee – Dr. G Mott.

Minutes of the meeting held 20 March 2024. **Noted.**

Minutes of the Teams meeting with UDC held 21 March 2024. **Noted.**

Proposal: EPC submit representations as circulated with regard to a S106 agreement for application UTT/24/0543/OP, 240 dwellings north of Bedwell Road, to UDC Planning.

GM proposed, RF seconded the vote was carried unanimously.

Consideration of any noise report received from Stephen Gosling regarding application UTT/24/0543/OP, 240 dwellings north of Bedwell Road.

Proposal: On the information supplied by Stephen Gosling, EPC employ Stephen Gosling to prepare a report for submission to UDC objecting to planning application UTT/24/0543/OP on the grounds of noise. At a cost of £5400+VAT.

GM proposed, RF seconded the vote was carried by 8 in favour, and 2 abstentions.

Henham Parish Council have agreed to pay 50% of the cost and Ugley Parish Council are paying £500.

BB said EPC have enough in the budget to cover the fee.

GM said if anyone would like to visit the site, to see just how noisy the proposed development is, he will arrange one, daytime or early evening would be best time.

GM is to speak on behalf of EPC at the Local Plan meeting on Wednesday 10 April 2024. Issues GM will broach are.

- The difficulties in accessing the data on the website. Not all the information was in the correct place, including that submitted by EPC.
- There was a three-month delay in the information being published.
- Reports by planning officers had been promised, these have been forgotten.
- The Local Plan says there are no more houses for Elsenham, (although there are some for Henham and Stansted), but it does not give the reason.
- Takeley has objected to the Countryside Protection Zone (CSPS) boundary being moved in the south, yet the boundary was moved in the north to allow another 450 houses in Elsenham to be built.

I. UTT/24/0650/HHF

New brick porch to existing property with tiled pitched roof. 4 Alsa Leys, Elsenham. No objection.

Decisions made.

II. UTT/24/0161/FUL

Change of use from agricultural grazing land to land in connection with the commercial use of the wellness hub. Construction of a swimming pool and associated operational development. Eastfield Stables, May Walk, Elsenham Road. Stansted. **Refused.**

III. UTT/24/0068/FUL

Change of use from agricultural grazing land and construction of a tennis court. Eastfield Stables, May Walk, Elsenham Road, Stansted. **Refused.**

IV. UTT/23/2973/LB

Conversion of outbuilding to annexe, including internal and external alterations to curtilage listed building. Priors, Tye Green Lane, Tye Green. Elsenham. **Approved.**

V. UTT/23/2922/LB

Demolition of existing rear extension and parapet dormer. Erection of rear one and a half storey extension, alterations to rear dormer. Internal alterations to include vaulting internal first floor bedroom, removing modern partitions, converting existing attic. Erection of detached home office in rear garden. Tinkers Cottage, The Cross, Hall Road, Elsenham. **Approved.**

VI. UTT/23/2193/PINS, S62A/2023/0023

5 residential dwellings and associated infrastructure. Land At Eastfield Stables, May Walk, Elsenham Road, Stansted. **Refused under S62A procedure.**

22785. The New Community Centre Committee.

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2024. **Noted.**

22786. Playing Field Committee.

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2024. **Noted.**

Anna said the bee orchids in the Spinney were lovely. Heather and Paul Salvidge have protected them by fencing them off.

BB said in the minutes of the last meeting it had been agreed to pursuing the project of an outdoor gym on the playing field next to the tennis courts. After first carrying out a survey to see if residents thought an outdoor gym was needed in the village and consulting with the neighbouring houses regarding the possible noise.

The consulting with the adjacent neighbours had not been carried out.

SW said this will be discussed at the next Playing Field Meeting being held on 24 April 2024. Details will be decided as to the contents of the letter and which properties will be advised.

The survey so far has 82 votes for yes, a gym is a good idea, 12 votes for no, 7 votes for yes but would not use it. Questions had also been raised on the cost and some have said that a skateboard park would be used more.

22787. County Councillors' report.

Hall Road is to be closed for further repairs to the potholes.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has had a change of roles. It is now in their remit to inspect 143 county councils social care departments in the next 15 months. This is just not durable. ECC have not had their inspection yet.

Parents, of course, want what is best for their special needs child. But unfortunately, some children do not receive the help they need. Children on the lower levels may achieve their potential by going to a mainstream school, but this is only if the support required by that child is in place at the school.

Some parents are taking county councils to tribunals to try and get the help their child needs. The judges will, quite rightly, always assess the needs of the child and rule that the child get the best care for their needs, but, very sadly, this is not always deliverable. Spaces for children with special needs are limited.

AM asked about whether lower income families lose out on receiving the best care for their child.

RG said there was no suggestion that this was the case, parents are very well supported and informed.

BD pointed out that Essex was the hardest county to obtain a care plan.

RF informed RG about Affinity Water saying the water on Grove Hill was spring water.

RG said he would investigate it but thought it may be a case of Affinity Water passing the buck.

JM said that despite supplying RG with a long list of possible dates, he was still waiting for a day to be arranged for RG a Highways Officer and himself to conduct a tour of Elsenham to assess the condition of the roads and footpaths of the village.

RG said he would contact JM with a convenient day.

RG said the plans to divert lorries from using Stansted Village and Grove Hill was still ongoing. The camera survey had resulted in some interesting findings which RG may be able to disclose at the next meeting. The project has now been moved to the Highways Panel to assess.

Essex County Council is not in favour of a blanket 20mph speed limit on residential streets, only on some roads.

The Consultation on draft recommendations for division boundaries in Essex is still under review. Elsenham, Henham and Stansted Parish Councils had objected.

Chris Bush said that he could not find any submission from Essex Highways to the 240 houses north of Bedwell Road, Ugley. RG said he would investigate.

The drains on the bridge on the High Street have filled up again.

JM said he has spent three hours with the police driving around the area. The Police Officer had taken over 220 photos and given out 2 tickets.

FL said the drain by De Mandeville was packed to the top. All the drains in Station Road and Stansted Roads are also full.

22788. Rights of Way and Open Spaces Committee.

SW led the Good Friday walk which included a stop off for tea and cake. 21 people attended.

22789. Financial Payments.

The following cheques and payments required for approval:

M Burke	£195.00
Castle Water	£6.82
Uttlesford Community Travel	£100.00
HEU Old Franks	£47.50
Corr Skip Hire	£339.60
Sharon Jones	£37.05
3G Mobile	£20.61
Hp Ink	£25.49
Zoom	£15.59
3G Mobile	£24.00
Elsenham Village Hall	£20.00
M Burke	£1033.00
Perrys	£74.00
L Johnson	£55.60
J Minor	£65.80
T D Kitchens	£490.00
Sharon Jones	£35.45
Beltons Gardening	£231.52
Castle water	13.20
Inland revenue	£638.64
Wages X 3	£2,928.38
M Burke	£1021.50
H P Ink	£25.49
M Burke	£372.00
ECA	£130.00
3G Mobile	£20.61
3G Mobile	£24.00

All payments approved for signing.

A summary of receipts and payments **Noted**.

Detailed receipts form – **Noted**.

GM and LJ signed the summary and receipts form.

BB gave a short summing up of the finances at the end of the financial year.

The summary sheet showed the end of the financial year ending on 31 March 2024.

Overall, our funds in banks had declined from £138.9k to £117.4K, but this comprised of a £36.9k reduction in earmarked reserves (EMR) from £96.2k to £59.3k, but not all of this had been spent, as there had been some transfers to general reserves (GR); for example there had been a release of £5k from EMR to GR

regarding an office for the Parish Clerk. At the end of the financial year General Reserves were £59.3k, compared with £42.7k at the start of the year. We had received £1,374 in interest because of our deposit into a Unity Trust Bank account.

LJ confirmed that the funding from the Football Foundation grant has now been paid into EPC's bank account.

PJ asked that now we had the funding was it correct that Elsenham Football Club still must pay two thirds of the maintenance fees, BB said this was correct.

22794. Finance proposal.

Proposal: EPC renew their membership to The National Allotment Society at a cost of £55.00.

BB proposed, RF seconded the vote was carried unanimously.

Proposal: GM and LJ go on the training session covering procurement, contract finder and PWLB applications, £25.00 each via zoom 18 April 2024 10am – 2pm. BB proposed, BD seconded the vote was carried unanimously.

Proposal: EPC give a grant to the Henham and Elsenham Scouts Group to help fund 2 members to go to the 3-yearly Australian Jamboree in Maryborough. It was agreed that due to restrictions on the council's budgets this year, EPC would not, unfortunately, be able to donate any funds to this venture.

Proposal: EPC renew their membership to EALC and NALC at a cost of £715.27. BB proposed, JM seconded, the vote was carried unanimously.

22795. Clerk's Report

LJ reminded members that the Annual Parish Meeting is to be held on Thursday 25 April 2024 at 8pm in the Memorial Hall.

LJ reminded members that the next Parish Council meeting on 13 May 2024 will be the Annual Parish Council Meeting. The first item at this meeting always being the voting of a Chair for the coming year. LJ will circulate a list of all the committees and working groups for members to check, these will then also be voted on at the meeting.

After a 4-year absence the Essex Village of the Year and Rural Community Awards are back. It was agreed that Moyra Jackson, co-opted member, and Chair of the Flowerbed Committee would complete the nomination form for the 'Best Village Award'.

This year there are three other categories, Village Hall and Community Building Award.

Community and Voluntary Group Award.

Community Enterprise Award.

All entries must be submitted no later than Monday 3 June 2024.

LJ had received phone calls from residents living on Southfield Close, complaining about the contractors parking in the visitor's car parking spaces when there were still spaces in the temporary car park. LJ to email the site manager.

The water tap by the Church feeds the standpipe at the allotments and the church. At present the church's use is minimal, only being used for flower arrangements and cleaning. EPC pay for this water supply however, the church is building an annexe to provide toilets and refreshments, building work is due to start later this year. They are planning to tap into the water supply. This will increase the water usage, especially during the construction phase, and later as the annexe will have flushing toilets and a small kitchen.

The Allotment Committee will need to monitor this situation and have discussions with the Church.

GM, BB and RF signed the form for updating the signature agreement on the NS&I Investment Account, which EPC currently hold.

22796. Flowerbed Committee.

The hanging baskets have been ordered for May. Some grasses have been purchased for the Leigh Drive flowerbeds. The committee was successful in obtaining a grant from UDC for £1,000, this will go to curate a wildflower area on De-Mandeville Green.

FL questioned the number of weeds in the flowerbed on the corner of Robin Hood Road. This flowerbed has not been weeded for at least two months.

22797. Allotments Committee.

The committee was awaiting another quote for the repair to the taps in the Smith Road allotments. The tidy-up-day was very successful.

22798. Transport.

Stephens Bus Company have increased their prices by 4.2%. However, the £2.00 capped fare still applies which runs until 31st December 2024, this limits the price of any single journey to a maximum of £2.00.

The bus that was damaged by a construction lorry on Grove Hill has now been repaired.

Tenders are now being accepted for the future bus service contract, which will start at the end of the year. With all the Section 106 monies pledged to the improvement of the 7 and 7A buses routes Elsenham should be okay for the next couple of years.

22799. Communication Committee.

BD was very grateful to PD and AM for joining the committee, they have been a great help. The survey for the outdoor gym had been posted on the EPC Facebook page.

BD still needs to add AM as an administrator for Facebook.

22800. Charities.

LJ had circulated the list of charities that EPC have donated to over the last few years. AM had amalgamated them onto one document.

It was important that any donation EPC gave should have an impact on Elsenham. Councillors need to think which charities they would like to support. However, it was difficult to create a list that EPC would donate to, as things are always changing.

SW said she would like a donation to be given to the Macmillan fund.

JM asked if the funds from the clothes bank in the playing field could be added to the donation budget. The Finance Committee will look into this.

22801. PCSO.

LJ had attended two meetings with UDC and Essex Police, regarding part funding a PCSO. There are still a lot of questions unanswered, another meeting is to be held on 19 April 2024.

FL had spoken to Sergeant Sharmer, who said the funding of the PCSOs are all in limbo. The PCSOs are currently being funded by Essex Police.

More information is required before EPC could commit to part funding a PCSO.

22802. Correspondence

- I. EALC Police, Fire and Crime e-Bulletin- Week commencing 26 February 2024.
- II. PFCC Weekly Newsletter 1st March 2024.
- III. Invitation to Participate in Travel Essex Bus Services Survey.
- IV. EALC News e-Bulletin Week Commencing 4th March 2024.
- V. Your Essex: your need-to-know news and information this March.
- VI. 100 villages Member Update - 05 March 2024. Rural Engagement Team February Newsletter.
- VII. Community Special Constables update.
- VIII. Violence and Vulnerability Unit Newsletter.
- IX. NALC Newsletter.
- X. Business News: Spring Budget 2024.
- XI. PFCC Weekly Newsletter 8th March 2024.
- XII. Minutes of the PPG meeting.
- XIII. EALC News e-Bulletin Week Commencing 11th March 2024.
- XIV. Fare Increase effective from 1st April 2024.
- XV. PFCC Weekly Newsletter 15th March 2024.
- XVI. Our Essex: budget and delivering for our extraordinary county.
- XVII. EALC News e-Bulletin Week Commencing 18th March 2024.
- XVIII. Violence and Vulnerability Unit Newsletter.
- XIX. EALC Announcement- Essex County Council Local Minerals Plan Consultation deadline extended.
- XX. Have you seen our Rubbish Rumours yet, ECC.
- XXI. Local Plan News: Consultation representations published + Local Plan Panel.
- XXII. EALC Police, Fire and Crime e-Bulletin- Week commencing 18th March 2024.
- XXIII. PFCC Weekly Newsletter 21st March 2024.
- XXIV. EALC News e-Bulletin Week Commencing 25th March 2024.
- XXV. PFCC Weekly Newsletter 28th March 2024.
- XXVI. Rural Engagement Team March Newsletter.
- XXVII. Press release – Your Community Needs You!
- XXVIII. EALC Police, Fire and Crime e-Bulletin Week Commencing 25th March 2024
- XXIX. Your Essex: your need-to-know news and information this April.
- XXX. EALC County Update- Affiliation Special 2024.
- XXXI. District News: Information about elections, Draft Local Plan.
- XXXII. Member update 28 March 2024.
- XXXIII. NALC Chief Executive’s Bulletin.
- XXXIV. NALC Events.

22803. Items to be added to next month's agenda.

There were no items requested.

Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be on 13 May 2024.

The meeting finished at 9.45pm