

## **Elsenham Parish Council**

### **Minutes of Community Centre Committee Meeting, held at 7.30 pm at Old Frank's on Monday 20 May 2024**

#### **Present:**

Dr G Mott (Chair, GM), Mr B Burlton (BB), Mr A Hathaway (AH), Mr P Jarvis (PJ),  
Ms A Mowbray (AM) and Mrs E Terry (ET)

Members of the public: 0

*In the absence of the Parish Clerk, the minutes were taken by GM*

#### **1. Election of Chair.**

BB proposed GM as Chair, ET seconded, the vote was carried unanimously.  
GM is elected chair of the Community Centre Committee for the coming year.

#### **2. Apologies for absence.**

Mrs L Johnson, Parish Clerk (LJ) and Mr B Olgivie (BO)

#### **Not present.**

Mr. R Gooding (RG)

#### **3. Declaration of Interests.**

PJ declared an interest as a member of Elsenham Youth Football Club.

#### **4. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2024.**

The minutes of the meeting on 22 April 2024 were signed by the Chair as a true record.

#### **5. Actions following the meeting held on 22 April 2024**

Included below.

#### **6. Meeting with ECA (subject to confirmation)**

AH reported that he had discussed the topics with members of ECA Committee, and would speak on their behalf.

##### **6.1 Parish Council**

##### **The Community Centre project**

a. Background

b. Progress

c. Draft layout, indicating areas and approximate sizes

AH confirmed that ECA Committee members are aware of the background and proposals, which were not discussed further on this occasion.

##### **6.2 Elsenham Community Association**

##### **Memorial Hall**

a. Floor space, kitchen provision, storage

The capacity is 80 standing and 60 seated. The floor space is adequate for day-to-day events and only inadequate for relatively large events such as race night. There is no licence for cooking. The Lunch Club, typically with 25 to 30 people, might use the oven to warm plates or to warm a dessert if required. A larger kitchen would be helpful. More storage would be very welcome - the lack of storage is a large issue to all the groups that hire the Hall.

b. Levels of usage  
Generally high

c. Are the facilities adequate?

It is frustrating that tables and chairs have to be taken out, used, and then put back. It would be helpful if there was a side area where furniture could be left. The lino floor surface is terrible - a hard surface would be much better.

Groups have their own notice boards, which means that they are able to feel ownership.

d. Property condition and medium-long term maintenance/development plans.

The floor has been looked at, and might need refurbishing. Work has been done on the roof. There is a need for an outside toilet, and some income is ring-fenced for the purpose. The biggest issue is heating - there is no gas, and thus reliance on inefficient electric storage heaters.

e. Are potential users turned away?

Teenage parties, interpreted literally as ages 13 to 19, are refused. EYFC members are allowed, since there is effective adult supervision. Letting is on a first come, first served basis. During the period of hiring, the group has ownership - thus the venue is EYFC's on Saturday mornings (although the Tennis Club pay to use the toilets).

Many hirers are regular. The floor surface is such that tap-dancing and studs are forbidden. Hirers are rarely turned away because their numbers are too big, but that is probably because they are self-selecting. Bookings are accepted for Saturdays and Sundays pm. Occasional bookings are about one a month, or slightly more - say between 12 and 20 over a year.

### **6.3 The two centres**

a. Is there potential for usage to be co-ordinated?

Users of the Memorial Hall have set slots. On the question of whether the two halls could concentrate on different types of bookings, hirers would vote with their feet. Smaller groups would stay with the Memorial Hall, where rates are cheap, since the Hall has a low cost base. AH felt that the patterns of usage mean that the attractions of the CC would be the Community Café, sports facilities and the bar - weddings, wakes, the full package.

The Memorial Hall has only had two licensed bars in ten years. A TEN (Temporary Event Notice) is needed, at a cost of £21 per event. (The Bowls Club has a members' licence.) The Memorial Hall sold tinned beer and wine by the bottle. The CC would need a full licence; the premises would need to be managed, inspected and checked. AM noted that her Running Club took £150 from 60 runners

- b. Could any of the Memorial Hall activities usefully be transferred to the Community Centre?
- c. Could any of the projected Community Centre usages usefully be situated in the Memorial Hall?

It was felt that there was no potential for either of the above.

#### **6.4 Publicity**

Could the ECA help to publicise the new Community Centre?

*Elsenham News* can be used to promote the CC. AH would be happy to put a notice up in the Memorial Hall.

### **7. Business Plan**

See 22 April minutes, 9.

Starting point by BB.

BO had pointed towards the Manuden website, where hiring charges are available. AH has provided some information on the costs of running the Memorial Hall, which is low cost. More information on running costs would be useful from, eg, Manuden and Duxford.

It was noted that there would be a considerable difference in running costs depending on whether it would be necessary to pay staff or rely on volunteers. BB said that employing staff while paying off a loan would be very difficult.

AM observed that the structure would be different if the management was set up as a charity. She also noted that nursery provision is very hard to find generally, and that a nursery, or pre-school, would be an attraction; ET suggested that perhaps the nursery could be in the morning with community use in the afternoon.

BB said that he needs to do significant work on the Business Plan before the next meeting of the Committee.

**Action: BB**

It was agreed to take Item 12 next.

### **12. Funding.**

- a. Interest on funds held by UDC.

FoI request reply received, 24 April.

The reply was from Jody Etherington, UDC Director of Revenue, Finance and Benefits.

GM pointed to the provisions of the S106 agreement regarding the development north of Stansted Road:

UDC shall upon receipt of the payments place the Community Facilities Contribution the Play Areas Contribution and the Education Contribution in an interest bearing account

and a further clause which requires UDC to repay any unused part of the contribution with interest to the developer.

It was agreed that GM would draft a reply to Jody Etherington, asking how the interest would be calculated, in the event that it became necessary to return it, or any part, to the developer.

**Action: GM**

AM said that it was an interesting question, if UDC built the CC, would they use the interest.

AH and BB said they would do some investigating as to what happened regarding interest in these circumstances elsewhere.

**Action: AH and BB**

GM undertook to enquire of RG if he could determine what action ECC would

take in these circumstances.

**Action: GM and RG**

- b. Grant funding application with EYFC to the Football Foundation.

Query on number of years the Football Foundation require commitment from EPC. See email from PJ, 22 April 2024.

PJ said there is no hard and fast answer to the question. The Football Foundation are looking to provide money to land owners, and need assurance that football can continue to be played if a grant is made. Essex FA need the agreement, as they would be the facilitators. PJ undertook to contact Nick Emery of Essex FA.

**Action: PJ**

EYFC would also need to be on board, and the question should be discussed at the forthcoming meeting with EPC.

- c. List of funding opportunities from UDC.

To be available Summer 2024.

Noted

- d. Public Works Loan

i. Contact with Public Works Loan Board.

ii. Contact with those who have secured and managed loans (Didcot TC has been contacted).

iii. Documentation required.

BB presented a revised version of the Costs and Contributions spreadsheet, with a new Row 30 which shows the effect if the costs were reduced by £600,000. The maximum loan required would be £956,000 in April 2026, before the first instalment of Bloor Phase 2.

BB has had phone conversations, and now has two email addresses. The approval of the Department of Levelling Up is needed.

EALC needs to be consulted. BB will contact.

**Action: BB**

It would be useful to contact other parishes which have secured a loan.

**Action: BB**

## **8. Government website action**

### **8.1 Prequalification process**

Recommendation that we do not undertake such a process

GM said that, as previously noted, it was stated at the Community Governance Training Event that there was no benefit, and that RG was similarly minded. It was therefore agreed that we will not include such a process.

### **8.2 Specification of CC**

a. Draft layout by BB, available

b. Revised Design Brief: 2.3 re main hall

c. Revised Instructions to Tenderers: 4.11, 4.13 (date needed), 8 deleted

d. Revised Terms & Conditions: 15.1

### **8.3 Invitations to tender**

Architects to be advised, as before

LJ to ask Essex Football Association if they could supply a list of architects and/or builders.

PJ undertook to ask, since he will be speaking to them anyway.

**Action: PJ**

EPC could also ask Pelham Structures; this company is based in Pelham and designed the Manuden Community Centre.

GM will contact again Nathalie Pearson, architects.net (16 Feb 2024).

GM has contacted architects via bark.com.

This yielded seven contacts, and GM undertook that they would be advised when the posting is made on the Government website. GM also noted one further practice with experience of a community centre. GM said that many architects work only on extensions and conversions and the like; however, it would be a mistake to assume that a small practice is necessarily unsuitable, since it could be an architect with experience of large projects who has set up independently.

It was agreed that it would be well to proceed now since useful information on likely costs should be acquired. The time-table should be as follows:

submit to the Government website by 1 June 2024; **Action: GM and LJ**  
deadline for responses 12 July 2024;  
evaluation of responses by September 2024.

#### **9. Village fete, 22 June 2024**

EPC stall and Community Centre presence.

Volunteers for the Working Party: BB, GM, AM, Bianca Donald (not available on the day).

GM had forwarded a draft document for consideration.

It was questioned whether the PC has booked space.

**Action: LJ**

AH offered a gazebo.

#### **10. Meeting with EYFC**

To be combined with Finance Committee and Playing Field Committee.

The agenda needs to be agreed and sent to EYFC for agreement, and a date for the meeting arranged.

**Action: LJ**

#### **11. Transfer of land.**

a. Land (David Wilson Homes). See 22 April minutes, 7.

b. Ransom strip (Crest Nicholson).

GM drew attention to the provision of the S106 agreement regarding the development north of Stansted Road:

UDC shall procure the construction of the multi-purpose community building

...

There has been discussion with UDC Planning in the past over the meaning of these words. GM proposed that Jody Etherington, as above, should be contacted and urged to ensure that the land is transferred to EPC without further delay.

**Action: GM**

#### **12. Funding.**

See above, after 7.

#### **13. Buy-in from the local community and generating interest.**

a. Meeting with village groups.

b. Village lottery.

It was agreed not to proceed with a lottery.

c. Publicity (café, changing rooms, child care).

d. Clubs in the village.

- e. School book-bags.
- f. Tesco.
- g. *Elsenham News*. Item forthcoming in June edition
- h. Village fete (9. above)
- i. Page on website.
- j. Questionnaire distributed through knocking on doors.

**14. Next steps.**

Retained for reference purposes

- Business Plan
- Appoint architects.
- Costing programme (helped by architects). See also 'Work Stages and Costs'.
- Public Exhibition - produced by architects.
- Referendum - after Public Exhibition and Consultation, small booklet in the *Elsenham News*.
- Public Works (or other) loan - needs Business Plan and Referendum.
- Detailed Planning Permission.
- Go out to tender for contract.
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**15. Next meeting.**

Monday 17 June 2024, 7.30 pm., and the third Monday in the month thereafter.

**16. AOB.**

It was agreed that in future the first substantive item would be Business Plan, followed by Funding.

The meeting finished at 9.35 pm