



## **Elsenham Parish Council**

### **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in The Memorial Hall at 7.45pm on 3 June 2024**

#### **Members of Elsenham Parish Council (EPC) present:**

Cllr. G Mott (Chair GM), Cllr. B Burlton (Vice-Chair BB), Cllr. G Bently (GB),  
Cllr. B Donald (BD), 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:**

5 plus District Cllr. P Lees (PL).

**Apologies for absence:** None.

**Declarations of Interest:** RF declared an interest in number 15 on the agenda, Flowerbed Committee, RF is a member of the Elsenham History Society.

BB declared an interest in number 10 on the agenda, Playing Field Committee, BB's property is adjacent to where the outdoor gym may be installed.

#### **Open to the public**

**28896.** A resident asked if Uttlesford District Council (UDC) had ensured that the problem that arose regarding the bin collections, when all collections had to stop, would not happen again. UDC only had a single licence holder with no back-up when that employee left.

BD replied that she had co-chaired a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on Operational Resilience, investigating the failing of UDC. 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. All departments are to give a full report by September 2024 with actions they have taken to resolve these problems.

BD said she did not have the authority to make this enquiry national.

- 28897.** A resident asked about the article on the new community centre in Elsenham, the resident thought all the funding for the community centre was coming from developers under the Section 106 agreement, so why had EPC increased their precept to help pay for it. GM said that some funding from Section 106 agreements had been given by developers in the village, with some still pending. EPC was now going out to tender asking for architects. BB explained that the Section 106 money is not enough to build a new community centre. However, the increase in the precept was not all to help fund the community centre. At the time the precept was agreed inflation was in double figures, residents were also asking if EPC could include funding for a PCSO and funding to help keep the Elsenham News in production. PJ said that everyone agrees that funding for the new community centre should come from developers but unfortunately funds from the Section 106 are not enough to build the kind of community centre the village requires.
- 28898.** Chris Bush said the path along Hall Road is overgrown with vegetation plus about an inch of mud. GM said that if both EPC and Mr. Bush wrote to Cllr Ray Gooding something may get done. Action LJ to email Cllr. Ray Gooding.
- 28899.** A resident from De-Mandeville said she had attended the meeting to see what would be decided regarding the hedge on the boundary of her property and De-Mandeville Green. The resident asked, if possible, she would like the height of the hedge to be cut back to 3 or 4 feet.
- 28900.** A resident asked for more detail on planning application 8.1 **UTT/24/1202/PAR3**. GM said EPC had submitted an objection to this application which was now on UDC's website. GM thanked JM for alerting EPC to this application. JM reported that Essex Police was also objecting to issuing an operational licence.

### **Closed to the public**

**28901. Actions from previous minutes – None.**

**28902. Minutes.**

The Council considered the minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2024, GM signed the minutes as a true record.

**28903. District Councillors' Report.**

PL said UDC's five-year land supply was now 4.75.

Due to the General Election called for 4 July, UDC will enter the pre-election period on 25 May 2024. Restrictions will be put in place to stop any support for a political party. The hearing of the Local Plan has therefore been moved to 30 July 2024. Due to these restrictions, all meetings between 25 May and 4 July 2024, that would normally be shown live on the website, will not be broadcast. Members of the public are still welcome to attend meetings in-person, and recordings of these meetings will be uploaded to the website following the election.

A new audio system is now being used to record meetings. The sound is much clearer and zooms in on the person speaking, the system also allows two meetings in different locations to link up.

By paying off a loan early UDC have saved £10 million, making the council £700,000 per year better off.

UDC have applied for a Wild Animal Licence.

UDC refused one million kilos of green beans to be brought into the country, as they were not up to standard.

PJ thanked UDC for cutting the grass on Jenkins Drive, but the cut grass has just been left and it looks very messy, is UDC coming back to remove the grass?

PL said she doubted it would be but would ask.

LJ asked if PL would house any further bags of winter salt?

PL said that she had about 200 bags in her front garden but would take one more pallet.

BD said that she had £200 from the Ward Initiative Fund to give to good causes.

Cllr Martin Foley was elected as chair of the council at the District Annual Council meeting on 21 May 2024. The vice-chair is Cllr Chris Criscione. Cllr Foley has chosen the Uttlesford Foodbank as his nominated charity for the year.

UDC officially unveiled its new-look sheltered accommodation scheme at Walden Place, Saffron Walden. The venue has undergone an 18-month redevelopment. The focus of the project has been to separate the grade-II listed Georgian house from the sheltered housing flats and to provide improved communal facilities for the tenants, as well as two new flats. The main house will be sold as a private sale and the funds will help to pay for the redevelopment works.

UDC are still supporting Ukraine citizens, by helping them with their rent.

UDC have secured a grant to upgrade energy devices in council houses. This will help residents reduce their bills and keep their homes warm.

#### **28904. Planning Committee.**

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2024 – **noted.**

The monthly Teams meeting with UDC was cancelled this month due to the Planning Officer being unwell. The next Teams meeting is to be held on 13 June 2024.

#### **Applications submitted to UDC.**

- I. Planning UTT/24/1202/PAR3** Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings to a flexible use within Storage or Distribution (Use Class B8), Hotels (Use Class C1), Commercial/Business/Service (Use Class E). Building At Fullers End Farm, Fullers End, Tye Green Road Elsenham. **EPC have submitted an objection, which is now on UDC's website.**

- II. **UTT/24/1049/FUL** Section 73A Retrospective application for erection of 6 no. dwellings with access and car parking (amendments to approved application UTT/18/1608/FUL). Land To The West Of The Oak Barn, Green Street, Elsenham. **This application will be discussed at the Planning Committee meeting on 5 June 2024.**

**Decision made by UDC.**

- III. **Bloor Homes, ‘Phase 2’, 200 dwellings, UTT/23/2063/DFO.**  
Revised detailed application made, 1 March 2024.  
**Approved on 29 May 2024.**

**28905. The New Community Centre Committee.**

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2024 – **noted.**

The tenders are now on the Government Finders Contract Website, closing date 12 July 2024. There have so far been 494 views.

**28906. Playing Field Committee.**

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2024 – **noted.**

The children’s play area in the playing field will be closed for 24 hours on Thursday 6 June, this is so Dania can treat the paths that were installed; grass is growing on the paths.

The committee is investigating installing extra paths to link pieces of play equipment as areas gets very muddy.

BD said that the ‘EAGLES’ were very interested in taking over the open space land opposite the play area on Isabel Drive, to turn it into a wildflower area.

BB asked why PJ had said at the Playing Field Committee meeting that the area adjacent to the teen shelter is not suitable for the outdoor gym, saying it was too close to the football pitches. BB had looked at the area and it was several meters away from the goal. GM said an onsite meeting was going to be arranged to assess the area.

Another location that was mentioned at the playing field meeting was the square area between the Memorial Hall and the Bowls Club. However, SW had checked with Allan Hathaway, and this is part of ECA land.

**28907. Rights of Way and Open Spaces.**

It was agreed to ask EPC’s grass cutter not to cut the two areas of grass on the western side of New Road & Alsa Gardens junction. Kevin Wood, a co-opted member of EROWOS has volunteered to cut the sight line on these areas but the rest of the area will be left as there are wildflowers growing.

A member of EROWOS had suggested moving the sarsen stone, which is in Tye Green, to its original position in the churchyard. FL asked how the stone was going to be moved. GM said that this may have to be reconsidered.

**28908. Financial Payments.**

The following cheques and payments required for approval:

TD Kitchens	£1050.00
NALC	£52.04
24Acoustics	£7,380.00

L Johnson	£38.71
eventbrite	£52.04
Castle Water	£124.70
Castle Water	£8.07
Castle Water	£40.12
Zoom	£15.59
Open Spaces Society	£45.00
T & S Ashenden	£15.30
ECA	£5.00
R Franklin	£31.55
G Mott	£31.55
S Waite	£31.55
M Burke	£1,476.50
Inland Revenue	£630.03
Wages X 3	£3,007.51
Rialtas RSB	£230.40
H P Ink	£25.49
3G Mobile	£20.61
3G Mobile	£25.49

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 explained that although the payment to 24 Acoustics had shown twice on the payments list, the company had only been paid once. LJ had reversed off the extra payment.

LJ had experienced difficulties in arranging a meeting with EPC auditor. Auditor, Mrs Victoria Waples, has been highly recommended by Thaxted Parish Council.

A meeting to complete the audit 2023/2024 has been arranged with Mrs Waples on 18 June 2024.

**Proposal:** EPC engage Mrs. Victoria Waples to complete the audit for 2023/2024. BB proposed, GM seconded, the vote was carried unanimously.

The Annual Governance Statement and the Accounting Statement must be signed off by the internal auditor, then signed by EPC's Chair and displayed on EPC's website before the 30 June 2024. It was therefore agreed that EPC give permission for the Finance Committee to sign both statements at a Finance Committee meeting to be held between 20 June – 29 June.

#### **28909. Finance proposal.**

BB attends the online course, 'Unleashing the power of local councils to tackle the climate emergency', on 26 June at a cost of £52.00.

JM proposed, BD seconded the vote was carried unanimously.

### **28910. Clerk's Report**

The contract for part funding of a PCSO with Stansted and Henham Parish Councils had been sent by UDC for EPC to sign. The contract started on 1 April 2024. LJ had received confirmation from Angela Greneski at UDC, that the contract could be changed to start on 1 July making it a nine-month contract. LJ had also asked why the hours had been reduced from 10 hours per week to 5 hours per week, while the amount of funding had increased. Angela Greneski replied, *the reduction of committed hours incorporates the cost of the uplift of the PCSO pay award in September*. The answer was unclear to members.

Some members felt very passionately that EPC should employ a PCSO again. Whenever the PCSO helps with speed watch in the village residents asks him questions and talk about concerns they have. It is very difficult to speak to a police officer these days, with many of the police stations now closed. Residents need to have someone they could contact if necessary.

Other members thought the cost of £4,445.44 for nine months was not good use of public money. The PCSO would only be contracted for 5 hours per week for Elsenham this included his travel to and from Elsenham. Taking off holidays and any sickness it meant the PCSO would spend little time in Elsenham. The administration for this agreement had always been unreliable. Henham PC, who have continued to part fund a PCSO, said that they still do not receive reports on time, and last year they did not receive one invoice for payment from UDC for their share of the PCSO.

**Proposal:** EPC sign the contract to part fund a PCSO for nine months'

FL proposed, BD seconded, the vote was not carried by 4 in favour, 5 against and 2 abstentions. LJ to inform UDC.

It has now been established that the hedge that borders 8 De Mandeville is on EPC land. Therefore, EPC is responsible for it.

**Proposal:** EPC arrange for the hedge to be cut back, after the bird nesting season, to 3/4 feet in height, plus cut back all the hedging encroaching onto the pavement Removing all the cuttings. The hedge will be added to the hedge maintenance list to be maintained each year in December/January.

AM proposed, SW seconded, the vote was carried unanimously.

### **28911. Flowerbed Committee.**

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2024 – **Noted**.

There are some concerns regarding placing flowers on or around the Pump House. At the meeting on 20 May Allan Hathaway had agreed to try and design a structure for plants which could be hang over the pump house without causing damage. SW explained that this was just an idea for the Flowerbed Committee to discuss. The History Society had written a letter to EPC stating their objections to decorating the Pump House with plants. EPC took over the ownership of The Pump House on behalf of the village, in 2016 from Mr Walter Gilbey, grandson of Sir Walter Gilbey.

### **28912. Allotments Committee.**

Nothing to report.

### **28913. Transport.**

The results of the Essex Bus Survey 2024 has been published. The Elsenham bus number 7 was 12<sup>th</sup> out of 100 for the number of users, but bus number 7A was 95<sup>th</sup>. Both services are safe to be continued at present.

**28914. Communication Committee.**

Nothing to report.

**28915. Elsenham Fete.**

A meeting had been held.

A gazebo is to be provided from Allan Hathaway. BB will provide a table and two stands. There will be a rogues gallery game with all the councillors' photos, then people will be asked to guess their combined age. Card and crayons will be available for the children to draw.

Anna, Administrator for Henham, Elsenham & Ugley Churches, has offered to laminate any papers. BB is concentrating on the new community centre. GM had created flyers to hand out. Councillors are asked to inform LJ of their age.

**Proposal:** EPC set a budget of £100 for items to be purchased.

BB proposed, JM seconded, the vote was carried unanimously.

**28916. Hedge in the cemetery.**

**Proposal:** EPC reduce the height of the hedge, that backs onto a garage in Markwells, to two feet below the roof line of the garage. This will be carried out annually in December/January and added to the hedge schedule.

BB proposed, JM seconded, the vote was carried unanimously.

**28917. Citizens Advice.**

Due to cutbacks by the Citizens Advice service because of lack of funding, BD proposed that EPC gives them a donation.

BB proposed that this is left until the next meeting, with a firm proposal on the agenda, stating which Citizen Advice office and the amount of the donation.

FL seconded, the vote was carried by 8 in favour, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

**28918. 'What's on in Elsenham'**

'What's on in Elsenham' was organized by Charles Willbe on behalf of the Church. SW is going to talk to Mr. Willbe about ECA organizing another one.

**28919. Correspondence.**

**28920.** EALC Police, Fire and Crime e-Bulletin- Week commencing 6th May 2024

**28921.** PFCC Weekly Newsletter 10th May 2024.

**28922.** EALC News e-Bulletin Week Commencing 13th May 2024.

**28923.** PFCC Weekly Newsletter 17th May 2024.

**28924.** EALC Police, Fire and Crime e-Bulletin- Week commencing 13th May 2024.

**28925.** Chief Executive's Bulletin NALC including The Good Councillors Guild.

**28926.** News Bulletin - 22 May 2024.

**28927.** Love Essex.

**28928.** EALC Police, Fire and Crime e-Bulletin- PFCC Priorities 2024-28.

**28929.** PFCC Weekly Newsletter 24th May 2024.

**28930.** Special Constabulary recruitment event.

**28931. Items to be added to next month's agenda.**

JM – What is going to happen to the funding in the budget for the PCSO?

GM said he was unable to attend a Parish Forum on 10 June. If anyone would like to attend, please advise LJ.

**Date of next meeting.**

The next meeting will be on 1 July 2024.

The meeting finished at 9.50pm.