



Elsenham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in The Memorial Hall at 7.45pm on 5 August 2024

Members of Elsenham Parish Council (EPC) present:

Cllr. G Mott (Chair GM), Cllr. B Burlton (Vice-Chair BB), Cllr. G Bentley (GB),
Cllr. P Davis (PD), Cllr. B Donald (BD), Cllr. R Franklin (RF),
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 Essex County Cllr. R Gooding (RG) and District Cllr. P Lees. (PL).

Apologies for absence:

Cllr. P Jarvis (PJ).

Declarations of Interest: None.

Open to the public

- 22781.** A resident complained about Hall Road being closed. This is due to utility companies connecting facilities to the new Vistry development. The residents had asked the Vistry site manager why traffic lights could not have been installed, he said he would investigate it and ask his manager. There are so many road closures. When a road is closed for work to be carried out, all the issues on that road should be addressed at the same time. Coordination and management at Highways need to be addressed.
GB said that EPC had written to the Secretary of State saying that Highways were not doing their job and were not fit for purpose.
- 22782.** A resident complained about the water pressure in the village. There are times during the day when they do not have enough water to shower or flush the toilet. The resident had contacted Affinity Water many times. EPC are limited as to what they can do. FL said it would help if more residents complained about the water pressure.
PL said one email signed by all the residents would be more formal.
LJ will contact Affinity Water explaining the problem that Elsenham has.

- 22783.** A resident said some of the trees and vegetation along Station Road were obstructing the path.
GM explained these belong to ECC who usually cut them back once a year, around October time.
JM added that it also depended on where the roots are. If the roots were inside the property boundary it then become the householder's responsibility.

Closed to the public

- 22784. Actions from previous minutes** – None.

22785. Minutes.

The Council considered the minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2024, GM signed the minutes as a true record.

22786. District Councillors' Reports.

PL said the Local Plan Regulation 19 is now finalised. The consultation will go live on 8 August for eight weeks. UDC will hold public events in September.

UDC are sending an 'annual electoral canvass of households 2024'. PL asked all residents that receive one to complete it.

UDC are arranging a mobile community supermarket to help families that have financial difficulties.

UDC are giving grants for play equipment up to £10,000 using levelling up funding.

BD added that Regulation 19 had changed the housing allocation for Elsenham. 110 houses plus a school on the Bloor phase 3 land has been added.

22787. Planning Committee – Dr. G Mott.

Minutes of the meeting with Bloor Homes 2 July 2024 – **Noted.**

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2024 – **Noted.**

Minutes of the meeting with UDC held on 18 July 2024 – **Noted.**

Minutes of the meeting held with Dean Hermitage, UDC. – **Noted.**

Two follow up emails from the meeting with Bloor Homes on 2 July have been sent to Alex Clark at Bloor. The first asking for the full specification of the football pitches on the development, which Alex Clark had promised to supply. The second was a request for a short length of footway, about 25 metres, from the railway level crossing gates along Old Mead Road to the car park. When the crossing gates are open there are a lot of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, with evident danger. Alex Clark had agreed that this was a reasonable request and undertook to report back as to whether it is feasible.

EPC had been told the applications for 40 houses off Robin Hood Road and 240 houses north of Bedwell Road were expected to go to the Planning Committee on 24 July 2024. However, neither application was on the agenda.

GM held a meeting with Dean Hermitage, Strategic Director of Planning at UDC, regarding the changes to the housing allocation for Elsenham in Regulation 19. At the meeting GM said it was stated explicitly in Regulation 18 that there would be no more allocations to Elsenham, because this settlement had already had over 1,000 new houses. Yet in Regulation 19 there is a proposal for 110 dwellings, plus educational provision, in Henham, close to the Elsenham parish boundary. This seems like UDC did a tradeoff with Bloor?

Dean Hermitage said the additional development at Elsenham was identified to help enable the provision of a primary school and an early years' facility, when ECC complained that there were no provisions for early years in the new Local Plan. Dean Hermitage said a meeting was held with Bloor just after Regulation 18 was published. Dean Hermitage said it was “quid-pro-quo”.

GM also spoke on behalf of EPC at UDC's full Council meeting on 30 July 2024, on the Local Plan, Regulation 19. GM pointed out there was already provisions for a primary school on Bloor phase 1. Plus, land on the Vistry development on Hall Road has provision for an early learning school, in a much better location being adjacent to Elsenham Primary School. ECC do not seem in any hurry to utilise either provision.

GM said EPC will continue to object to the 110 houses, Elsenham do not need any more houses.

GM said that UDC have changed the classification, areas are now considered as settlements not parishes. There has been no consultation or justification for this unprecedented procedure, which was not included for comment in Regulation 18. Parish Councils should have been asked

BB said the fact that Elsenham will now be joined to Thaxted and not Stansted is bureaucratic nonsense. Elsenham and Stansted share many facilities including the same doctors' surgery.

The public consultation for Regulation 19 is to run from 8 August – 3 October 2024.

Applications submitted to UDC Planning.

- I. **UTT/24/1688/FUL** Change of use and conversion of part of the garage into a treatment room and waiting area for business use. 18 Southfield Close, Elsenham. **EPC have no objection.**
- II. **UTT/24/1618/PINS** Consultation on S62A/2024/0049 - Approval of reserved matters following outline approval UTT/20/2908/OP for up to 50 market and affordable dwellings, public open space and associated highways and drainage infrastructure - Land South Of Bedwell Road, Ugley. **The detailed application for the site to the south of Bedwell Road has been submitted, the applicants have chosen to apply direct to the Planning Inspectorate under the S62A provisions. EPC have sent objections on behalf of EPC and Ugley PC.**

Decisions made by UDC.

- III. **UTT/24/1373/PAQ3** Prior Notification of change of use of agricultural building to 1 no. dwelling. Barn At Evie Rose Cottage Woodlands, Elsenham Hall, Elsenham. **Prior approval not required.**

- IV. **UTT/24/1074/CLE** Certificate of lawfulness for existing use of building as a standalone dwelling. Building At the Old Dairy Farm, Green Street, Elsenham. **Refused.**
- V. **UTT/24/0991/HHF** Proposed single storey rear extension and alterations including addition of first floor balcony. 12 New Road, Elsenham. **Approved.**
- VI. **UTT/24/0727/FUL** Proposed plant machinery and associated gantry at roof level including 1 no. air handling unit, 6 no. extractor fans and 12 no. external condensers and the erection of externally illuminated signage. Molton Brown Cosmetics, Green Street, Elsenham. **Approved.**
- VII. **UTT/23/2831/FUL** Conversion of barn to 1 no. dwelling and proposed garage. Pennington Hall, Henham Road, Elsenham. **Approved.**

22788. Essex County Councillor's report.

The feasibility study of Grove Hill has now been published. It shows the changes to direct large vehicles through Takeley is not feasible. Two separate studies were taken the last one in November 2023. The study shows 1.5% of the traffic flow, going up Grove Hill from Stansted to Elsenham, were vehicles over the weight limit, with 2.5% coming down Grove Hill. The study therefore showed the weight restrictions are working. The 1.5% going up could represent the buses and local delivery vehicles.

The other issue is that Takeley already has too many large vehicles going through their village.

AM asked if the traffic lights could be placed at the top of the hill. RG said that Highways had considered this, but the drivers pulling out of the driveways could not see the lights which would be a safety issue.

RF said with so many roads closed the study would not have been accurate.

JM said that the only way large vehicles can enter Elsenham at present is via Thaxted. The study should have shown 0% of vehicles over the weight limit going up Grove Hill.

FL said that residents were complaining that the sequence of the traffic lights had been changed and drivers were having to wait longer. RG said he would check the calibration of the lights.

BD asked about the ECC transport survey. Rural bus services may never be profit making but it is important for rural villages to have a good reliable bus service. Will ECC unlock future funding opportunities to keep the buses running?

RG said ECC will help to fund the bus services. However, the 7 and 7A buses are only feasible in Elsenham because of the school children using it.

JM said the water was, once again, running down Hall Road. Why doesn't Highways resurface the whole of Hall Road while it is closed.

RG said it was not a suitable time when utility companies were presently digging it up.

22789. The New Community Centre Committee.

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2024. **Noted.**

The deadline for the architects' tenders to be submitted to EPC has now passed. EPC received thirty-nine tenders. There are four appraisers, BB, AM, RG and Allan Hathaway with GM being the moderator. LJ has sent all the tenders to the appraisers. The appraisers will assess each one on an evaluation document. The evaluation of responses will be carried out on 7 September 2024. A short list of 4 or 5 will be produced, at this stage.

22790. Playing Field Committee.

Minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2024. **Noted.**

BB said that there had been a group of about 6 youths in the children's play area late last night, misusing the play equipment. BB had not informed the police, but wanted EPC to note that there are times when neighbouring houses are disturbed by noise in the evenings, coming from the playing field.

JM said all anti-social behavior should be reported to the police.

SW said locking the playing field gates could be an option, this can be discussed at the next playing field meeting.

22791. Financial Payments.

The following cheques and payments required for approval:

H M Revenue	£630.03
ECA	£140.00
Beltons Gardening	£307.51
A & J lighting	£28.80
Castle Water	£7.14
M Burke	£45.00
3G Mobile	£20.61
3G Mobile	£25.90
L Johnson	£122.71
Castle Water	£40.12
Lawn Doctor	£1,134.00
Lawn Doctor	£2635.20
Zoom	£15.59
S Jones	£43.35
S Jones	£48
S Jones	£32.45
M Jackson	£89.50
A Hathaway	£44.00
H P Ink	£25.49
M Burke	£175.00
Castle Water	£6.91
M Burke	£1,476.50
Wages X 3	£2,798.35

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.

22792. End of year 2023/2024.

AGAR circulated to all Councillors.

Auditor's report, circulated to all Councillors.

The Finance Committee will hold a meeting to address the auditor's report.

The end of the year documents have now all been sent to the external auditor.

22793. Financial Proposals

- a) **Proposal:** EPC give a grant to the Citizens Advice East Herts.

The letter sent by the Citizens Advice East Herts did not address all the questions raised by EPC. The Citizens Advice in East Herts no longer have an office to meet people face to face. To access their services, residents have to phone at certain times during the day. There is still an office at Saffron Walden, councillors thought most people would rather talk to someone face to face than on a telephone. Another point being that Elsenham is not in Hertfordshire.

GM proposed EPC does not support the Citizens Advice in East Herts.

BB seconded, the vote was carried 8 in favour, 1 abstention.

RG said he could arrange for Katie from Saffron Walden branch to give a talk at a parish council meeting, giving an insight into all the advice and help they give to people.

- b) **Proposal:** EPC renew their membership to Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management at the cost of £100.

BD proposed, BB seconded the vote was carried unanimously.

- c) **Proposal:** GM attends the first WorkNest Module 1 on 11th September 2024, 'The Employment Framework' at a cost of £80.

BB proposed, BD seconded the vote was carried unanimously.

- d) **Proposal:** EPC pay an extra £1,508 to UK Power Network to connect the streetlight by the Elsenham's Surgery, on a Sunday.

There are currently 'no parking' cones along the road by Elsenham surgery. Councillors agreed to wait and see if UK Power Network have organised this, so that connection of the streetlight could be conducted on a weekday and EPC would therefore not have to pay the extra payment for the work being carried out on a Sunday.

Proposal: If UK Power Network have still not connected the streetlight by next week, BB will phone UK Power Network complaints department. BB will inform them that EPC are not happy about paying an extra £1,508 for the connection to be carried out on a Sunday. UK Power Network had sent an invoice which EPC had paid in May 2023. If extra funds were required, due to the position of the streetlight, this should have been included in the original invoice. If BB is unsuccessful and UK Power Network still insist on the extra payment, EPC will have to pay, as it is imperative that the streetlight is working before autumn.

JM seconded, the vote was carried unanimously.

22791. Parish Clerk's Report.

Proposal: EPC adopt the amended Standing Orders, changing the threshold for public contract finder from £25,000 to £30,000.

BB proposed, RF seconded the vote was carried unanimously.

Proposal: EPC agree that the Allotment Committee may purchase a lock for the Smith Road allotment gate.

BB proposed, BD seconded the vote was carried unanimously.

It may be cost effective to attach the lock to a chain, this way the lock is unlikely to get lost or break by falling on the ground.

Bloor has asked for a further 8 road names for their Phase 2 development. Phase 1 has wildflower names, Henham PC would like to continue with this aspect and have asked EPC to provide the names. Councillors to circulate any wildflower names they feel are appropriate.

22792. Flowerbed Committee.

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2024. **Noted.**

22793. Allotments Committee.

One plot holder on the Smith Road allotments has asked to keep bees. This will be discussed at the next allotment meeting in September.

22794. Transport.

RF had attended a Transport Meeting on 24 July 2024.

14 members were present at the Transport Meeting. The part of the meeting which was of particular interest to Elsenham was the overview from Local Bus team (Essex County Council Contracted Services).

The Essex County Council provide financial support to approximately 15% of local Bus Services within Essex. The remaining 85% are run by Bus Operators at a profit. Following a recent tender negotiation some services have been withdrawn or revised and others have different operators.

There have been no changes to the 7 & 7A Bus services which operate within Elsenham, hopefully, this means there will be no changes for some time.

RF said the Village Services currently operates with considerable financial support from Estate Builders, which is part of a Section 106 obligation. When this support is no longer in place, bus services in rural villages could change.

ECC has signed a contract with Clear Channel UK for the maintenance, installation and upkeep of bus shelters in Essex. This contract will last 10 years.

22795. Communication Committee.

AM is to add an article on Facebook regarding energy efficiency schemes that residents can apply for to receive free energy efficiency upgrades to their homes.

22796. Gambling Act 2005 Consultation.

UDC have asked for comments on a revised statement of principles to set out how they will carry out their duties as required under the Gambling Act 2005.

This must be done every 3 years, and the process includes a statutory public consultation.

AM wrote a response to the consultation.

Proposal: EPC submit the response for the Gambling Act 2005 Consultation to UDC.

GB proposed, BD seconded the vote was carried unanimously.

22797. Correspondence

22798. NALC Events.

22799. EALC Police, Fire and Crime e-Bulletin- Week commencing 24th June 2024.

22800. UALC AGM - Wednesday 24th July 2024 7.30 for 7.45pm. Clavering Village Hall.

22801. PFCC Weekly Newsletter 28th June 2024.

22802. Rural Engagement Team June Newsletter.

22803. EALC Weekly News e-Bulletin Week Commencing 1st July 2024.

22804. Local Council Liaison Forum - Minutes and Presentations.

22805. Gambling Act 2005 Consultation.

22806. Hall Road, Elsenham - Road Closure.

22807. PFCC Weekly Newsletter 5th July 2024.

22808. Essex-wide Bus Shelter Contract - District & Parish Member Briefing.

22809. Upcoming Councillor Training.

22810. EALC News e-Bulletin Week Commencing 8th July 2024.

22811. NALC Events.

22812. Violence and Vulnerability Unit Newsletter.

22813. Essex - FR – Stakeholders.

22814. EALC Police, Fire and Crime e-Bulletin- Week commencing 8th July 2024.

22815. Local Plan News: Councillors to consider revised Draft Local Plan.

22816. PFCC Weekly Newsletter 12th July 2024.

22817. Explore Essex.

22818. Member Update 14 July 2024-100 Villages.

22819. SLCC 15 July 2024.

22820. NALC Event 16 July 2024.

22821. EALC News e-Bulletin Week Commencing 15th July 2024.

22822. News Bulletin SLCC- 17 July 2024.

22823. UDC Parish Council Standards Training.

22824. EALC Police, Fire and Crime e-Bulletin- Week Commencing 15th July 2024.

22825. PFCC Weekly Newsletter 19th July 2024.

22826. Safety of Lithium ion Batteries and e-bikes and scooters.

22827. Violence and Vulnerability Unit Newsletter.

22828. NALC Events 23 July.

22829. EALC Police, Fire and Crime e-Bulletin- Week Commencing 22nd July 2024.

22830. PFCC Weekly Newsletter 26th July 2024.

22831. Items to be added to next month's agenda.

BB - Dispensing service at Elsenham Surgery.

BD - Talk by the Citizen Advice, if it can be arranged.

22832. Open to the Public (if time allows).

A resident said that there is vegetation growing at the back of her house near the railway line, which has not been cut back for many years.

JM said this is the responsibility of Network Rail, JM gave the resident contact details.

Public asked to leave the meeting.

In accordance with section 1 of the Public Bodies (admissions to meeting) Act 1960, The public and press will be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

22833. Extra Paths in the children's play area.

EPC received three quotes for the work in the children's play area. After some discussion GM made the following proposal.

Proposal: EPC engage Spellbrook Drives to install the extra paths A – I in the children's play area at a cost of £4,575.

This price would not include path J on the map, which is the path leading from the swings to the horse and is probably the least required.

BD made an amendment to the proposal.

Proposal: EPC accept Spellbrook Drives quote of £5,500 to install paths A – J in the children's play area.

FL seconded, the vote amendment was passed by 9 in favour and 1 against.

Proposal: EPC engage Spellbrook Drives to install the extra paths A – J in the children's play area at a cost of £5,500.

BD proposed, JM seconded the vote was carried unanimously.

Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be on 2 September 2024.

The meeting finished at 9.58pm.