

Minutes of Elmsett Parish Council meeting held on Monday 15 September 2025 at the Elmsett Village Hall.

- 09.25.00 **PRESENT:** Alan Newman in the Chair, Paul Firman, Nick Bird, Fiona Watt, John Sones and Kathleen Peacock (clerk). Two members of the public were in attendance.
- 09.25.01 **APOLOGIES:** Verified absence was received from Fran Williams (illness). Leigh Jamieson DBC and Robert Lindsay SCC were absent.
- 09.25.02 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON AGENDA ITEMS:** None were received.
- 09.25.03 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 July were signed as an accurate record; subject to two spelling amendments.
- 09.25.04 **4.1. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** Councillor Leigh Jamieson was absent from the meeting.
- 4.2 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** Councillor Robert Linsay was absent from the meeting.
- 09.25.05 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** The Chairman gave the following update to the Council;
- In response to a written request from an Elmsett resident; the Council discussed the pros and cons of purchasing an additional dog waste bin for the Hadleigh Road area. The cost of procuring a new bin is approximately £300 with an £85 annual service charge. Fiona Watt proposed the Council purchased the bin and this motion was seconded by Councillor John Sones.
- The purchase cost of the new bin will be charged the Councils CIL budget, and the service charge will be covered through precept funding. The item will be placed on the agenda of the Council's October meeting for formal approval. The new bin's location will be published in the Elmsett magazine and on Elmsett Village Facebook page.
- The Councils 2024/2025 External audit has been completed. The conclusion of audit notice has been posted to the Parish notice board. A copy of the notice will be published to the Council's website.
- 09.25.06 **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFRESH UPDATE:** An updated report has been received from the examiner. Three issues were noted within the report. A four-page response letter has been sent to Babeigh District Council drafted by the Parish Council's planning consultant. The initial report and response will be circulated to Council.
- 09.25.07 **HADLEIGH ROAD/DAISYFIELD ROAD IMPROVEMENTS:** The development has now been completed. Some damage remains to the edge of the carriageway in several places. A letter will be drafted by the

Chairman to ensure the damage is noted and attended to by the developer.

09.25.08 **RECESS FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS:** The Council discussed the pros and cons of introducing a 20mph speed limit in the village. Currently the pedestrian route along Whatfield road is busy and the members of the public in attendance were concerned about the risk of accidents due to speeding drivers and a lack of footway. In response; the Council noted they are aware of the issue and are waiting to see what impact the planned changes in road layout will have on traffic speed in Whatfield Road. Once the new layout has been completed the impact on speed can be monitored again.

The Council thoroughly discussed the pros and cons of introducing a 20mph speed limit at this time. Due to the length of time a 20mph speed limit would take to impose (as much as five years); the Council propose to introduce mobile responsive speed signage and monitoring their effect over time. Funding for this equipment has been accounted for in the 2025/26 budget and the Council is in the process of getting approval from the highway's authority. The Council did not rule out introducing a 20mph speed limit in the future but emphasised that it would require wider public consultation and time for the new road layout and speed signage to take effect. Concerns were raised about the ability to enforce any potential 20mph limit.

The Council discussed the current poor conspicuity of some speed limit signs. Some are concealed by hedging and one sign has been removed by the developer when amending the new ditch due to damage to its base. These issues will be added to a future agenda.

09.25.09 **COMMUNITY SHOP UPDATE:**

Councillor Fiona Watt reported positive trading figures for the April to September period. The shop had made a profit for the accounting period and there is hope that it will remain viable for the long term. Plans are being made to replace the shop's floor and increase storage and office space. Recent fund-raising efforts are proving fruitful with over £200 being raised at recent events. An anonymous donor had kindly offered to loan the shop the funding for replacing the floor. More fundraising events are being planned.

**VILLAGE HALL UPDATE:**

Improvement works to the Village Hall have been successfully completed over the summer. The Council positively appraised the works to the meeting rooms ceiling, décor and bar. The works to the ceiling have improved the rooms acoustics making the space more suitable for meetings. An increase in bookings has been noted. The Council commended the Village Hall Committee for their hard work in achieving such a positive result for the Elmsett community.

Further work to the hall floor is planned for the autumn. Funding for redecorating the hall and kitchen is required and the Village Hall

Committee are currently researching potential grants. Unfortunately, the Committee were unsuccessful in their recent application with Biffa mainly due to the beneficiary of the work being the local school. If the application can be amended to align more closely with the grants conditions the Committee will apply again in early spring.

The Committee is also considering how funding can be raised to improve the toilets and extend the car park. This is a long-term plan that will be completed in stages.

09.25.10 **DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE 20MPH SPEED LIMITS FOR ELMSETT;**

This agenda item was covered 09.25.08.

09.25.11 **WHATFIELD ROAD/SHRUBLANDS PROPOSED JUNCTION AND ROAD NARROWING:** The developer had scheduled these works to take place over summer. However, the planned works did not take place. A revised schedule is awaited from the developer. The works will include a 1.2m footway which will narrow the road to 3M.

09.25.12 **SPEED INDICATOR SIGNS:**

Purchasing Speed indicator signage is planned for Autumn/Winter 25. This is subject to highways approving the layouts.

09.25.13 **GRASSCUTTING IN THE CHURCHYARD:**

The council was concerned about the overgrown nature of the Church Yard as it pays 50% of the cutting costs. The Chairman has met with the Church, and the contractor has agreed that a harder cut was needed. This will be carried out in late September.

09.25.14 **COUNCIL POLICIES REVIEW:**

Current drafts of all the Council's operating policies were circulated to all Councillors during August. The Council asked for a more thorough review of the circulated Finance policy. This is a new template that would require extensive modification to make it Elmsett specific. Councillor Fiona Watt agreed to update the new template with terms relevant to Elmsett. The updated policy will be sent to all Councillors for approval at the 28 October meeting.

Other comments that were noted regarding the policy review were as follows.

Wildlife Policy – the Council discussed the track through The Squeech. The Council agreed there is currently no right of way at this location and this should be reflected in the policy.

Website Policy – this should be reviewed to ensure the hardware mentioned within the policy is accurate and in line with SALC guidelines.

Grant Making Policy – The Council wanted a more thorough review of the policy to ensure all legal/political references were accurate. Councillor Fiona Watt and Councillor Paul Firman agreed to update this policy for review at the 28 October meeting.

09.25.15 **NEW COUNCIL LAPTOP AND EMAIL DOMAIN ADDRESSES FOR COUNCILLORS:**

All members of Elmsett Parish Council will be given a new Elmsett-pc.gov.uk domain email addresses. One Councillor had declined the offer, however. The Council discussed their policies on email use and highlighted the conditions set out within it. If the Councillors in question does not use the new email address provided; they must ensure the address they use is exclusively only for Elmsett Parish Council business.

09.25.16 **NATIONWIDE SAVINGS ACCOUNT**

Nationwide have asked for ID verification for Councillor Nick Bird and Fiona Watt.

09.25.17 **FINANCE – ACCOUNTS DUE AND BANK RECONCILIATIONS:**

The Council verified and approved the following invoices

<b>Payee</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount</b>
T Hitchcock	Grasscutting invoice 303	75.00
T Hitchcock	Grasscutting invoice 294	75.00
Zurich Insurance	Asset insurance renewal	300.00
		546.53
Softcat invoice	Clerk Laptop	(PAID)
Babergh District Council	Dog Bin Services	896.40
	IT Consultancy	
Tom Everitt	Services	250.00
Ed Seeley (July)	St Peters chyd maint	170.00
Andrea Newman	Final Salary	438.62
PKF littlejohn	External Audit	378.00
Alan Newman	Laptop bag claim	19.99
		3,626.9

It was noted that £5223 precepts were received.

09.25.18 **PLANNING:**

The Council considered the following applications.

a) Ref DC/25/03406 Date 27.08.25. Plot 1 Land At, Hadleigh Road, Elmsett, Suffolk – NOTED

b) Ref DC/25/03624 Date 28.08.25. Shrubland Nursery Whatfield Road Elmsett Suffolk – The Council were concerned that the proposed change could lead to the loss of housing stock if any of the stock became Void. A comment would be sent to the planning team regarding this.

09.25.19 **DATES FOR NEXT MEETINGS:** TUESDAY 28 October & TUESDAY 9 December all at The Methodist Church Hall.

The meeting closed at 20.45

Signed:-..... Dated:-.....  
Chairman