

ELMSWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Elmswell Parish Council held on Monday 18th May 2026 at 7.00 pm at Blackbourne, Elmswell IP30 9UH

Present: Cllr Brown, Burch, Edmonds, Hancock, Mansel, Pallett, Roots, Shaw

Attending: County Council Ward Member Cllr James Patchett
Mid Suffolk District Council Ward Member Cllr Jen Overett
8 members of the public
Parish Clerk Peter Dow

26.05.01 **Resolved:**
That Cllr Pallett is elected Chairman of Council for the coming year.

26.05.02 **Noted:**
The Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office duly made and received.

26.05.03 **Noted:**
3.1 An apology for absence was noted from Cllr Barker who was on holiday
3.2 An apology for absence was noted from Cllr Schofield who was on holiday

26.05.04 **Noted:**
That there were no Members' Declarations of Local Non-Pecuniary Interests and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in subsequent agenda items and no additions or deletions to the Council's Register of Interests

26.05.05 **Resolved:**
That Cllr Barker is elected Vice Chairman of the Council for the coming year.

26.05.06 **Noted:**
That, there having been no meetings convened of either the Planning Committee or the Complaints Committee during the year, there was no report from either body.

26.05.07 **Noted:**
The Annual Report from the Council Chairman for 2025 / 2026.

26.05.08 **Resolved:**
That, as per the Annual Governance and Accountability Return under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, as amended 2020,2021 & 2024, this Council approves the accounts for the 12 months ended 31.03.26, tabled as Appendix A, and authorises the Chairman and the Responsible Finance Officer to sign them off as duly approved.

26.05.09 **Resolved:**
That this Council receives and approves the Risk Assessments scheduled at Appendix B as being a proper assessment of the risks facing the Council, that they demonstrate that appropriate management of those risks is in place and that the Chairman of this Meeting should sign the Financial Risk Assessment herewith tabled as properly reflecting the levels of the Council's financial risk.

26.05.10 **Resolved:**
That this Council notes and approves the written Policies scheduled at Appendix C as presenting an appropriate range of guidance regarding the Council's statutory obligations under the various specific areas of concern which are covered.

26.05.11 **Resolved:**
That Council acknowledges receipt on 28.04.2026 of the Internal Audit Report for the year ending 31.03.26, commissioned from Heelis & Lodge, as authorised under 25.10.13 and tabled as Appendix D, noting that Council continues to maintain effective governance arrangements including a robust framework of financial administration and internal controls.

- 26.05.12 **Resolved:**
That this Council approves the Annual Governance Statement, tabled as section 1 of the Annual Return to the External Auditor at Appendix E, as demonstrating a sound system of internal control including the preparation of the accounting statement at section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31.03.26 and that the Council Chairman and the Parish Clerk be authorised to sign a Statement of Confirmation of such approval.
- 26.05.13 **Resolved:**
That this Council approves the Accounting Statement, tabled as Section 2 of the Annual Return to the External Auditor at Appendix F, as being a fair representation of the Council's financial position and of its income and expenditure for the year ended 31.03.26 and that the Council Chairman be authorised to sign a Statement of Confirmation of such approval.
- 26.05.14 **Noted:**
14.1 A written report from BMSDC Ward Members Cllrs Overett & Mansell on their Council's activities for the past year.
- 26.05.15 **Noted:**
The assurance from Messrs. Burnett Barker, Solicitors, that all Deeds and other documents held on behalf of the Council are in order.
- 26.05.16 **Noted:**
The confirmation of the following Officers of the Council;
16.1 Footpath Officer (Cllr Hancock)
16.2 Tree Warden (Janet Spencer)
16.3 Newsletter Report editing board (Cllr Roots)
16.4 Safeguarding Lead (Cllr Shaw)
- 26.05.17 **Noted:**
The confirmation of the representatives of Council on the following bodies;
17.1 Elmswell Poor's Land Charity to 01.10.2026 (Mrs Linda Waspe, Cllrs Burch & Pallet & Parish Clerk)
17.2 Blackbourne & Wesley Management Association (Cllrs Burch, Shaw, & Hancock)
17.3 Elmswell Amenities Association (Cllr Hancock)
17.4 Community Rail Partnership (Cllr Shaw)
- 26.05.18 **Noted:**
The confirmation of members to the following Committees;
NB Chairman & Vice Chairman of Council are members *ex officio*:
18.1 Planning Committee (Currently all Members excepting Cllrs Roots & Schofield))
18.2 Complaints Committee (Currently all Members except Cllr Schofield)
- 26.05.19 **Noted:**
The confirmation of membership of the following organisations, current subscriptions indicated in brackets:
19.1 Community Action Suffolk (FOC)
19.2 Suffolk Preservation Society (Campaign to Protect Rural England) (£36.00)
19.3 National Community Land Trust (CLT) Network (£180.00)
19.4 MARPA (Mid Anglia Tail passengers Association) (£25.00)
19.5 The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) (£420.00)
- 26.05.20 **Noted:**
The confirmation of the signatories to the Council's cheque account with the Co-op Bank as Cllrs Burch, Edmonds, Mansel, Roots & Shaw, any two to sign, and that registration for on-line banking is in place for Cllrs Edmonds, Roots, Mansel & Shaw.
- 26.05.21 **Resolved:**
That this meeting notes and acknowledges that;
(i) the Elmswell Parish Council continues to satisfy the conditions as set out in the Parish Council (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2112 of the Localism Act 2011 and is, therefore,
(ii) eligible to act under the General Power of Competence established in the Act, and
(iii) intends to continue to act under the Power for as long as eligibility criteria remain satisfied.

- 26.05.22 **Resolved:**
That the Minutes of the Council meeting dated 20th April 2026, as tabled, be agreed as a true record.
- 26.05.23 **Noted:**
- 23.1 A written report from BMSDC Ward Members Cllrs Jen Overett & Sarah Mansel on activity in the past month.
 - 23.2 Cllr Mansell confirmed the imminent change to bin collections throughout the District and that all households would receive details through the post.
 - 23.3 Cllr James Patchett introduced himself as the newly elected Suffolk County Councillor representing Elmswell, confirming that the inaugural meeting of the new Administration had not yet been held but that this and other matters would be addressed in regular reports to Council.
 - 23.4 A member of the public spoke to confirm that photographs of hedgehogs on the proposed Crown Mill play garden site would be forwarded to the Council's consultants at Connected Ecology whose professional input is welcomed but that the exercise would seem to be predicated upon an intended use as play area which use has not yet been determined and that determination might have been reached earlier if there had been more consultation. The Chairman confirmed that no decision in this regard had been made but that one might be expected by the end of June.
 - 23.5 A member of the public spoke to confirm the approach recently made regarding the need for play facilities for older children in the village and suggesting that the green space at Clay Field might be developed in this regard. Cllr Mansel expressed an interest in taking this further.
 - 23.6 Cllr Mansel undertook to ascertain responsibility for the maintenance of the grassed area around the oak tree which remains prominent at the pedestrian / cycle path on School Road.
- 26.05.24 **Noted:**
The following correspondence to this meeting:
- 24.1 With Cllr Overett re Street Trading Licence
 - 24.2 With resident and Police re parking, Wetherden Road (circulated)
 - 24.3 With resident re cycle park (circulated)
- 26.05.25 **Noted:**
The Clerk's report as per Appendix G.
- 26.05.26 **Noted:**
That when any Complaints Committee business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda was invited none was forthcoming and that the date of the next Complaints Committee meeting was not known.
- 26.05.27 **Noted:**
The Planning Results as received from Mid Suffolk District Council:
- 27.1 **DC/26/00994** Erection of part two storey...
16 Cooks Road GRANTED EPC no comment
 - 27.2 **DC/26/01449** Application to determine...
Botany Bay Farm, Grove Lane APPROVAL DEEMED NOT REQUIRED
EPC no comment
 - 27.3 **DC/26/01127**
Discharge of Conditions DC/23/05878...
Elmswell Tavern, School Road APPROVED EPC no comment
- 26.05.28 **Noted:**
The Planning Applications referred from MSDC for comment:
- 28.1 **DC/26/01643**
Erection of a rear single storey extension and supporting internal alterations
2 Hulver Close
Councillors agreed to support this application
 - 28.2 **DC/26/01853**
Application under S73 for the Removal or Variation of Conditions following grant of DC/24/2890 dated 23/08/2024 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Erection of 4no. dwellings (following demolition of barns. - To vary Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents) and Condition 16 (External Facing and Roofing Materials) and confirm compliance with Conditions 11 and 12, as per accompanying letter/details/plans submitted.
Councillors opted to leave this technical decision to Planning Officers and opted to make no comment on this application.

- 26.05.29 **Resolved:**
That the Clerk makes known the Council's comments on the Planning Applications on this Agenda to The Chief Planning Officer at Mid Suffolk District Council.
- 26.05.30 **Noted:**
That there was no other Planning business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda.
- 26.05.31 **Resolved:**
That the Stowmarket Trefoil Guild be thanked for their exemplary stewardship of the Station Road recycling centre for the 6 months to 15th May and that a grant of £400.00 be made to the group's funds.
- 26.05.32 **Resolved:**
That Council receives the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal as commissioned from Connected Ecology ref 26.04.12 on land at Crown Mill and further instructs Connected Ecology to advise on a pre-works check prior to any breaking ground work on the site or significant works to shrubs for a sum not to exceed £650.00 net.
- 26.05.33 **Resolved:**
That Elmswell Parish Council makes a formal Representation of Support to Mid Suffolk District Council relating to their proposal under Schedule 4 of the LGA (Miscellaneous Provisions) 1982 to pass a Resolution to designate streets within its area for the purposes of street trading control stressing that such designation should include all of the streets in Elmswell.
- 26.05.34 **Noted:**
The authorised payments made and income received as per Appendices H and J
- 26.05.35 **Resolved:**
That proposed payments, scheduled as Appendix K, be authorised as necessary.
- 26.05.36 **Noted:**
The Balance as per Appendix L and the Chairman's confirmation that the relevant Bank Statements and computer report verify the published figure.
- 26.05.37 **Noted:**
The following when public comment or questions on matters relevant to Council business were invited;
- 37.1 A member of the public spoke as follows:
 - 37.1.1 to query the phrase, 'breaking ground' with reference to the Preliminary Ecological Assessment on the proposed play garden site at Crown Mill suggesting that reference should only be made to maintaining shrubs;
 - 37.1.2 to suggest that a definition of, 'streets', with regard to the proposed street trading licensing initiative might be that they are roads to which the public have access;
 - 37.1.3 to suggest that the proposed play garden site at Crown Mill should be left as is until a review of play provision throughout the village is made which might include the designation of land to the rear of the Elmswell Tavern for pre-school / toddler play provision.
 - 37.2 A member of the public spoke to express concerns that the recent Preliminary Ecological Assessment Report from Connected Ecology makes mention of, 'excavations'.
 - 37.3 A member of the public spoke as follows:
 - 37.3.1 to confirm that the current team of village litter pickers had all the equipment they needed
 - 37.3.2 to confirm that the vehicle which remains stationary at Wetherden Road where it has been the subject of complaint of highways hazard for many months, has a valid MOT only until June when action might be taken.
 - 37.4 Cllr Burch spoke to confirm that litter picking initiatives in the village had, originally under his auspices, been a regular feature for some 25 years.
 - 37.5 The Chairman spoke to confirm that EPC could not condone any litter picking on the A1088 roundabout by private individuals given the prohibition by SCC on grounds of the clear personal hazards posed from traffic.

26.05.38

Noted:

The following other Council business from Councillors or the Clerk for information, to be noted, or for inclusion on a future agenda;

- 38.1 Cllr Brown suggested that the initiative to address Succession Planning with regard to the inevitably impending need for the Clerk's role to be otherwise filled, was increasingly urgent and might be addressed now that the Tavern project proceeds as a much reduced workload. No action was determined.
- 38.2 The Clerk confirmed that the third element of the Rights of Way improvement scheme conducted in tandem with SCC on 3 paths in the village was to be delivered before the end of the year once complications regarding creation, extinguishment and diversion had been addressed and that the agreed financial contribution to the works would not be made until all of the improvements were completed.

26.05.39

Noted:

That the next Ordinary Meeting of Council was scheduled for Monday 15th June beginning at 7.30 p.m. at Blackbourne.

26.05.40

Noted:

That the meeting closed at 8.16pm.