

Minutes of the meeting of Elsdon Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Thursday 12 February, 2015

Present: Councillors Colby (Chair), White, Simmance, Maddison and Tait. Clerk - Martin Chilvers. Parishioners Tony Patrick and Ian King

1. Apologies: There were no apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest: There were none raised

3. Minutes of the previous Ordinary meeting: The minutes of the previous meeting was accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4. Col MacGregor-Smith – Update from Otterburn Camp: The Chair welcomed the Colonel to the meeting. He provided details of a major exercise about to start called 'Steel Sabre'. There will be 500 troops involved from 13 to 27 February. Over the last weekend of February there will be no firing but from 2nd through to 13 March 2000 troops will be involved. AS90's will be used and firing will potentially be happening from 09:00 through to 02:00 each day. Lynx helicopters will also be used in the exercise.

The Colonel did admit it is likely to be loud and noticeable especially as this is first major exercise for a few years however the noise level would be monitored. If there are any incidents in the village involving the troops then the Colonel wishes to be advised. The Colonel took questions.

The Chair asked if details can be shared on the local 'Town Crier' and the Colonel agreed to arrange for these to be sent to the Clerk.

Cllr Tait asked if there was a possibility for the Camp to provide a couple of portaloos for use at the village fete. The Colonel advised that whilst he would no longer be based at the Camp in August he do what he could to arrange this.

5. Matters arising

- a) *Elsdon Bridge repairs* – The Clerk advised of the conversation he had had with David Moat (NCC). He has been promised that Mr Moat continues to seek sign-off for the repairs to be undertaken.
- b) *State of local roads* – The Clerk advised he is sharing emails with Kevin Bartlett (NCC) regarding the local road repairs that have been identified.
- c) *Dark Sky Discovery Site* – The Clerk shared details received from Duncan Wise (NNPA) that Elsdon is now a confirmed Dark Sky Discovery Site. It was agreed that pavement slabs were required in front of the rotating information board at the Pinfold. It was agreed the Clerk would look to get a quote from D.Scott.
- d) *Community Asset transfer* – Cllr Simmance confirmed a meeting had been arranged with NCC for 11.00am on 19 February.
- e) *Protecting grass adjacent to Crawford Crescent (Homes for Northumberland)* – The Clerk reported he had spoken to and received an email from Hannah Simpson (Homes for Northumberland). He had advised they had received quotes for similar projects as that being proposed for Elsdon. The quotes had proved much higher than expected. As such cheaper alternative solutions would now be research and Hannah would be in touch in due course. There was discussion about possible funding and it was agreed the topic could be discussed at the next EPIC meeting.

6. Finance:

- a) It was agreed to reimburse £6.36 for the Clerk for a book of 2nd class stamps.
- b) The EPIC committee had now opened a bank account. It was agreed to make a payment of £2,187.63 to EPIC that was the total of funds from the village fete and remaining figure of the Parish Plan.

7. Planning:

- a) There were no planning applications this month.

There was discussion about the NCC Planning Review. The Chair read out the response from Stannington PC. The letter was fully supported by the Councillors and reference was also made to the additional factor that Elsdon had to consider with the planning process i.e the Northumberland National Park. It was agreed the Clerk would respond to all those copied into the original email from NCC.

8. New business:

- a) *Broadband in Elsdon - Update* – The Clerk read out an email received from John Cooper (iNorthumberland). Whilst it was agreed the message was encouraging that superfast broadband may soon be available with fibre connections direct to premises, there was some concern over confusing messages from BT Engineers working in the village. Additionally there were questions asked as to whether all properties would receive connection direct to premises and if not which would. It was agreed to invite John Cooper to a meeting to provide an update and clarity on the situation.
- b) *Consultation on future funding of subsidised bus services* – It was agreed as many people as possible should complete the survey and the Clerk was asked to arrange for details to be shared via the Town Crier.
- c) *Woodland Trust – Free trees offer* – It was agreed that an application should be made for a pack of trees. It was believed Carol Lewins had agreed to complete an application.

9. Any other business:

- a) It was reported that the next EPIC meeting would be on 23 February.
- b) Cllr Simmance spoke of the NALC training advertised and it was agreed to make the payment of £5.00 for him to attend.
- c) Cllr White highlighted the seat on the village green near the Bird in Bush required repairing. Other work was identified around the village and it was agreed the Clerk would contact David Scott for quotes.
- d) It was reported that on frosty days the area near the NCC recycling bins became slippery. As it had been the NCC that requested the siting of the bins at that spot they had been asked to provide a grit bin. To date this had been declined and the Clerk was asked to contact NCC.
- e) It was reported that a number of the trees that remain at Blaxter Quarry boarding the highway had fallen in the recent high winds. Some of these had caused obstruction across the A696. It was agreed the Clerk would write to Edwin-Thompson about the matter.

10. Date, time and place of next meeting: The next meeting will be on 12 March, 2015 starting at 7.00pm at the Village Hall, Elsdon
Meeting closed at 8.45pm