

Minutes of the meeting of Elsdon Parish Council on Thursday 13 July, 2023

Present: Councillors, Stuchfield (Chair), Simmance, Renton, Brownlee and Bell – Martin Chilvers, Clerk, Annie Gregory, Simon Etheridge & Neil Bird

1. Apologies: There were no apologies

2. Declarations of Interest: None were raised.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting: The minutes of the meeting had previously been shared with the Councillors and was accepted as a true record.

4. Matters arising

- a) Ray Wind update – The Clerk advised that there was nothing new to report this month however grants were still available and anyone with a query should contact Jo Willis, Community Development Officer on either 0776 217 9579 or at admin@raywindfund.co.uk
- b) Speed Indicator device (SID) – The Clerk advised he was waiting for an installation date.
- c) Potential funding for EV charging points – The Clerk reported that NCC would be sending an engineer to Elsdon to establish possible locations before costing the project to establish whether it was possible to proceed
- d) Community Emergency & Contingency Plan – The Chair advised that a meeting with the village hall committee had been arranged for 19 July to discuss the plan.
- e) Flooded section of B6341 – The Chair advised the problem had disappeared for now but it was agreed to monitor the situation.
- f) Ward Boundary change proposals – The Clerk confirmed the agreed objections to the proposed changes had been submitted.
- g) Anne-Marie Trevelyan (AMT) MP visit to Elsdon – The Chair provided an update on the meeting on 23 June. Points raised and responses received included
 1. Copper phone lines – AMT will contact BT Openreach and put pressure on them to abandon the switch over
 2. EV charging points – AMT sympathised with the Councillors in terms of cost that we had been quoted
 3. Ward boundary changes – our challenge was mentioned, point of council boundary change being different from parliamentary boundary was discussed, AMT seemed to think there was a good chance of success.
 4. State of local roads – general agreement but no actions. Issue of speeding mentioned, update on speed camera and general agreement that AMT will support lowering of speed limit in village. AMT mentioned that she has seen success with residents placing white fencing on either side of road to offer illusion that road narrows thus reducing speeding.
 5. Storm Arwen – An update was provided on the village hall receiving a generator and electrical work funded by Northern Powergrid (NPg).
 6. Mains electric to all properties – AMT happy to support any campaign with NPg
 7. Sewage – AMT said that she will write to all Elsdon residents requesting feedback on sewage issues so that she can take up with Northumbrian Water
- h) Local Transport Programme 2024/25 – Following discussion it was agreed to submit a request for a 20mph speed limit within the village.
- i) Village fete arrangements – The Chair confirmed that insurance had been taken to cover the dog show whilst the other aspects would be covered by the Parish Council insurance or the insurance of those providing a service / show at the fete. The Clerk confirmed the SAG had been submitted to NCC and the emergency services notified as well as the Parish Council insurers.

5. Finance:

- a) Budget update – The Clerk provided an update on the budget position with a balance of £10,539.19 that included the £8,640 grant from Ray Windfunds for the speed indicator device that will be installed shortly.

6. Planning:

- a) 23NP0021: Conversion of a stand alone double garage into a self contained unit of holiday accommodation: Bird in Bush, Elsdon, NE191AA – The matter was discussed between the Councillors between meetings. Whilst

there was general support for the application concern was raised about the very tight parking on a bad junction as well as the impact on the B6341 during building work should the application be agreed. The Parish Councillors were sympathetic to the objection from a local resident, a copy of which was received following the Parish Council response to NNPA, as the application stated inaccurately that the garage in question was stand alone, the garage indeed sharing a wall with the garage at Bush House.

b) 23NP0015: Proposed construction of 1 detached principal residence dwelling house: Land adjacent to Larkes Cottage, Elsdon, NE191AZ – There was discussion regarding the additional information received for this application. The Councillors felt that there was still a number of aspects that raised concern, including the high risk of flooding of the burn on to the B6341 and Batt House, the inappropriate shrubs recorded as to be used, the confusion as to what the retaining wall would be used for and that the area was a green field site. For these reasons it was agreed to object the application.

7. New business:

- a) Possible picnic and live music event on village green – The Clerk provided details he had received from Jackie Sewell from Bird in Bush (BiB) for the proposal on 30 September, 3.00pm to 7.00pm. It was proposed that the event would be bring your own picnic (or one could be purchased from the BiB) there would be an open mic and other bands playing as well as possibly Rothbury Pipe Band. It was questioned as to who the event would be targeted for and concern if there was too many attending from outside the village what provisions would be made for parking. It was also questioned as to how power would be safely provided to the village green. Whilst there was general agreement for the event it was requested that further information was provided before agreement for the village green to be used for such an event.
- b) County Council mobile library service – The Clerk provided details of the new van that will be trialled during July for the mobile library service and NCC seeking feedback. Additionally the timetable for visiting Elsdon was shared and would be posted on the Parish Council website and Facebook.
- c) Proposition for the use of the bus shelter & BT public telephone – The Clerk shared a request received for the bus shelter to be used as a ‘food bank’ and in particular for sharing summer vegetables and fruit grown locally. Additionally a request had been received for the telephone box to be used as a local library / book swap. Whilst acknowledging the good idea the Councillors were concerned how the bus shelter could be practically be used as requested without any power. Also it is still used as a bus shelter by children and an information hub set up by Revitalising Redesdale. The Councillors believed that the village hall (area where toilets were are available may be a better location for a food bank should the committee agree). The Clerk advised he had reported to BT that the phone appeared not to be working and advised an engineer would attend. Hence with the desire to maintain the telephone box as an operating phone the request for the library was declined. It was highlighted that it had been agreed previously for the back external wall of the bus shelter could have a wooden board attached with which to secure horses to however as yet this proposal had not been carried out.
- d) RTC Otterburn future trustees – The Clerk highlighted recent news that the RTC were seeking additional Trustees and new Chair in an effort to keep the Sports & Leisure Centre open. If there were no new Trustees then sadly arrangements would need to be made to close the Centre down.

8. Any other business:

- a) Cllr Renton expressed thanks to Dominique Bird who had kindly emptied the dog bin near the Starymers bridge and this was acknowledged by the other Councillors.
- b) Cllr Brownlee enquired as to whether the Clerk had received any correspondence from Cllr Steven Bridgett regarding the sale of the Rothbury Estate and the possibility of it being registered as a community asset. The Clerk advised he had not received anything.
- c) The Clerk enquired whether the Councillors wished to invite Chris Armstrong and Wendy Wright to the next meeting to discuss the arrangements for the bonfire / firework event on 5 November. All agreed.

9. Date, time and place of next meeting: The next meeting will be on 14 September, 2023 starting at 7.00pm at Elsdon Village Hall.

Meeting closed 8.35pm