

Minutes of the meeting of Elsdon Parish Council on Thursday 3 July, 2025

Present: Councillors, M. Stuchfield (Chair), D. Renton, L. Cook and A. Bell – Martin Chilvers, Clerk. Sarah Morpeth

1. Apologies: There were apologies from Cllr J. Bell.

2. Declarations of Interest: Cllr Cook 4e.

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

4. Matters arising

- a) Ray Wind update – The Clerk reported that in addition to a couple of resignations of CIC directors recently there would be five more leaving the CIC in mid 2026 when they had served the maximum term allowed for a Director. Anyone wishing to be considered as a Director of the Ray Windfunds CIC should contact either the Clerk or Jo Willis. Additionally anyone wishing to seek details of the grants available 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 had only that evening collected the latest SID data and had not had the chance to assess it. The Clerk reported that Richard McKenzie (NCC) had agreed to install speed stripes at Town Foot where it was believed traffic was speeding. It was noted that the edges of the road at this point were degrading and that potentially caused traffic to be closer to the centre of the road coming round the corner. The Councillors also noted that there was a significant number of pedestrians using that road as it was presently part of the Dan Burn walk and there was also a good number of horse riders using the road. Sara Morpeth provided details of the collision that had taken place a couple of months ago. Cllr Cook highlighted the volunteer police speed monitoring and it was agreed the Clerk would investigate this further.
- c) Starlink system at Elsdon Village Hall – The Councillors were disappointed to note that the Village Hall committee had decided not to seek the installation of the internet upgrade so that internet would be available to the Elsdon residents during long power outages. The Clerk advised that the committee had made arrangements to decline the grant that had been agreed with Ray Windfunds for the work. The Clerk further reported that the upgrade would still be happening in Bellingham and Otterburn.
- d) Green bins in Elsdon – Cllr Renton advised he had spoken to Cllr Bridgett and the topic was due to be discussed on 18 July.
- e) Proposed bonfire / fireworks event 2025 – There was discussion on the various aspects of the proposed bonfire & firework event on 5 November. It was noted that the guidance provided states the cordon needs to be 2.5 times the height of the bonfire, starting at the edge of the bonfire. The cordoned area can not extend into the road, as we can not cordon the road off. It was believed the maximum height the fire could be was 6 metres but it was agreed to measure the area before any further action was taken. Cllr A. Bell agreed to measure the area. It was agreed that there needed to be a minimum six marshals attending to the fire at all times whilst the crowd was present. It was noted that Mr Ross Corbett who was one of the organisers of the event would be willing to sign the risk assessment for the event. There was agreement to investigate the possibility of hiring portal toilets at the event and whether potentially the Bird in Bush may meet the cost of the hire. The Clerk was asked to book the First Responder who had attended the 2024 event. It was noted that there was a significant number of residents who did not like or want the bonfire / fireworks event and it was agreed to undertake research in early 2026 to establish the mood before any plans were made to run the event that year.

6. Finance:

- a) Budget update – The Clerk advised the Parish Council budget balance was £6,162.62 that included the remaining grant for the speed camera that Ray Windfunds advised potentially could be used for development within Elsdon. Consideration was given to the proposed project to introduce electric power to a section of the village green. It was highlighted that there was £2,500 grant presently with NCC available to call upon and Cllr Bridgett had promised possibly more if necessary. It was questioned whether a trench could be dug on the village green and the Clerk was asked to contact NNPA for guidance. It was agreed by all to proceed and obtain a quote for the work.
- b) Grant funds – This topic was covered in the agenda item above.

6. Planning:

- a) There were no planning applications to consider this month.

7. New business:

- a) Bottle bank in car park – It was confirmed changes had been made by NCC to the bottle banks at the car park so that bottles can now be deposited without the need to open the lids.
- b) Elsdon telephone box – The Clerk confirmed that the joint objection made by the Parish Council, Northumberland National Park and Mountain Rescue against the proposed removal of the public telephone box in the village had been successful and that the telephone would remain operational for emergency calls outgoing only.

8. Any other business:

- a) The Chair highlighted that it was Billy Lewis 70th birthday shortly and asked whether the Parish Council should do something to celebrate. It was agreed that in recognition of his tireless volunteer work about the village to purchase an engraved tankard. Cllr Cook agreed to purchase the item.

9. Date, time and place of next meeting: The next meeting will be on 14 August, 2025 starting at 7.00pm at Elsdon Village Hall. Meeting closed 8.30pm