

Minutes of the meeting of Elsdon Parish Council on Thursday 14 August, 2025

Present: Councillors, M. Stuchfield (Chair), L. Cook, A. Bell and J. Bell – Martin Chilvers, Clerk. Mr R. Simmance

1. Apologies: There were apologies from Cllr D. Renton.

2. Declarations of Interest: Cllr Cook 4d.

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 whilst not yet received the new grant amount from Vattenfall had been agreed for 2025/26. The CIC Directors had agreed subject to receipt of the grant to provide a further £100,000 towards the B4RN ultra-fast broadband project in the Ray Windfarm catchment area. 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 shared the most recent speed data from the SID. This shows the 85%ile in July recorded as 36.2mph and that 52.3% of passing vehicles were exceeding the 30mph speed limit. The SID has now been recording records for 23 months and the average 85%ile over that time is 36.5mph and 54.1% of passing vehicles have been recorded as exceeding the speed limit. The Clerk was asked to provide details of the average speed cameras that have recently been installed in Otterburn. Cllr A. Bell highlighted the recently new signs installed on the Gibbet road warning drivers to give appropriate distance when passing horse-riders. It was noted that the speed strips had not as yet been set up at Town Foot and the Clerk was asked to contact NCC for an update. The Clerk provided an update on the Community Speed Watch (CSW) scheme run by Northumbria Police and advised he was having difficulty receiving a response. It was agreed to pursue the scheme in collaboration with volunteers from Rochester so possibly residents could cover the each others village if preferred.
- c) Green bins in Elsdon – In the absence of Cllr Renton at the meeting it was agreed to seek an update on the matter for the next meeting.
- d) Proposed bonfire / fireworks event 2025 – Having received suitable guidance there was agreement that the maximum height of the fire for 2025 would be 6 meters. This would allow a required 15 meter cordon that would not encroach on the nearby road. It was agreed that there would be six marshals situated to monitor safety around the fire at all times whilst the public were in attendance. Following reports of people urinating against a wall in the village at the 2024 event, it was agreed to ask the bonfire committee to consider hiring portable toilets to avoid the situation occurring again this year. It was confirmed to booked the First Responders who attended last year and that they would be needed from 5:15pm to 7:30pm.

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. The Clerk advised that it was necessary to obtain quotes on the installation of electric to the village green before he can approach Cllr Bridgett for agreement and drawdown of the promised funding.
- b) Reimbursement to Cllr I. Cook for B. Lewins 70th birthday present – There was agreement of the payment for £32.92 + VAT as a 'thank-you' for Billy's volunteering work on village maintenance matters over the years.

6. Planning:

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

7. New business:

- a) Installation of electric power to a section of the village green – There was agreement to have two double sockets installed just on the far external side of the metre box. These would be serviced by appropriate extension leads and protected largely by mesh fencing along the route of the leads. These proposals would be subject to a

qualified electricians approval. Names were provided to approach for quotes of the creation of the plinth and fixing of the meter box as well as the required electrical work.

- b) Local Transport Programme – The Clerk reported that the scheme was due to be changing this year and would be a three year programme going forward. He advised that NCC would shortly be seeking the top three priorities from Parish and Town Councils. There was discussion regarding potential projects including reduction of the speed limit to 20mph in some parts of the village as well as safety features installed at the corner of Town Foot.
- c) Dementia training and equipment for village halls & parishes – The Chair provided details of the proposed training having received an email from Caroline Clarke of the Church & Community Partnership (CCP). Dates were provided and it was agreed that when a date was set the invite would be extended to neighbouring parishes and village halls.
- d) Preparation for August fete – The Chair reported that EPIC were meeting on Monday evening and all preparations were going well. It was planned that there should be three marquees used and these would be erected sometime from 19 August onwards.
- e) Ray Estate Woodland Management Plan – The Councillors were largely in agreement with the proposals but it was questioned whether there would be marked access routes for the public.

8. Any other business:

- a) The Chair reported that he had been contacted by a resident who had a complaint about their neighbour. It was agreed that the nature of the complaint was nothing that the Parish Council could advise on.
- b) There was agreement for the Clerk to make arrangements to have the slate dog bag dispenser repaired by Slate & Nature in West Woodburn.

9. Date, time and place of next meeting: The next meeting will be on 9 October, 2025 starting at 7.00pm at Elsdon Village Hall. Meeting closed 8.20pm