

Minutes of the meeting of Elsdon Parish Council on Thursday 9 October, 2025

Present: Councillors, M. Stuchfield (Chair), L. Cook, A. Bell and D. Renton – Martin Chilvers, Clerk. Sue Bolam (NNPA), Mr B. Lewins & Mr G. Rickelton

1. Apologies: There were no apologies.

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 he had not been able to attend the last Ray Windfunds CIC meeting and had no update to provide. It was noted that additional CIC Directors were still required and anyone interested 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 August recorded as 35.9mph and that 52.4% of passing vehicles were exceeding the 30mph speed limit. The SID has now been recording records for 24 months and the average 85%ile over that time is 36.4mph and 54.0% of passing vehicles have been recorded as exceeding the speed limit. The Chair advised that it was an easy process to complete the application for the Community Speed Watch (CSW) but that he had not received an acknowledgement. The Clerk advised he had shared details of CSW at the Rochester Parish Council meeting and the potential to share locations with volunteers in Elsdon. The Clerk provided a summary of an email from Richard McKenzie (NCC) advising proposals for introducing structure to reduce the speed of vehicles entering Elsdon on the B6341 from Otterburn. He also advised that a speed survey at Town Foot should be undertaken in the near future.
- c) Green bins in Elsdon – Cllr Renton advised that he had received no update on this matter from Cllr Bridgett and it was agreed to remove the topic from the agenda.
- d) Proposed bonfire / fireworks event 2025 – It was confirmed that the bonfire must not exceed 6m height and 10m diameter with a cordon around it of 15m and a minimum six marshals attending the bonfire whilst visitors were in the area. It was agreed that as recognition of complaints from the previous year there was a need for there to be portaloos available on the village green this year. The Risk Assessments were presented and Cllr Cook agreed to arrange for signatures by the firework and bonfire committee before the papers were signed by the Chair. Mr Lewins reported that he planned to begin building the bonfire from 1 November and appropriate materials for the bonfire could be left on the village green from 26 October.
- e) Installation of electric power to a section of village green – There was confirmation that the grant funds had been received from NCC and thanks were expressed to Cllr Bridgett. Payment was agreed to Northern Powergrid and the quotes received for the various aspects of the project were agreed by the Councillors. The Clerk reported that Mr Wright had confirmed he was scheduled to create the plinth on 27 October. It was agreed to place cones the night before to prevent parking near the location during work. It was also agreed to arrange to meet Mr Wright before the 27th to confirm details.
- f) Local Transport Programme 2026-28 – Following discussion there was agreement to submit two requests. 1) 20mph speed limit throughout the village 2) improved signage warning drivers of horse-riders and cyclists on the local roads, especially the B6341 and the Gibbett road.
- g) Dementia awareness event 27 October – The Chair provided details of this free event on Monday 27 October at Elsdon Village Hall. The event starts at 6.00 with free refreshments funded by Ray Windfunds. All are welcome.
- h) Review of the August village fete – It was agreed that the fete had gone well however whilst there seemed to a full car park it was felt there were perhaps not as many visiting as in previous years. It was reported that the existing fete committee could not commit to holding a further August fete due to lack of resources and volunteers willing to assist. It was hoped that another group would take on responsibilities but it was understood that it was possible there would be no fete in 2026. Thanks were expressed to Ray Windfunds who provided a grant towards the costs of the event.

6. Finance:

- a) Budget update – The Clerk advised the Parish Council budget balance was £12,938.59 that included the grant of £5,796.96 for the installation of electricity on the village green and the remainder of the grant for the speed camera that Ray Windfunds advised potentially could be used for development within Elsdon. This balance was before the agreement of the payments below. There was discussion regarding potential other projects within the Parish including the necessary work on the informal lay-by near the bus shelter. Different options were discussed and it was agreed to look to obtain quotes.
- b) Salary & expenses for Clerk (April 2025 – October 2025) – There was agreement of the payment for £611.00.
- c) Reimbursement to Clerk for purchase or Remembrance wreath – The payment of £14.16 + VAT was agreed.
- d) Payment of invoice to Northern Powergrid for work in respect of electric power to village green – The payment of £3,096.96 + VAT was agreed.
- e) Payment of invoice for repair to dog bag dispenser – The Clerk reported the repair had not as yet been completed and there was no invoice received this month.

6. Planning:

- a) 25NP0069: Alterations to dwelling including single storey rear side kitchen extension & single storey rear side utility extension: West Todholes, Elsdon, NE191BS – This application was considered between meetings and there had been agreement to support it.

7. New business:

- a) Parish Councillor vacancy – The Chair reported that Cllr John Bell had resigned and he thanked him for his time and contribution to the Parish Council.
- b) Repair to the dog bag dispenser – The Clerk reported that the repair work had not as yet been completed.
- c) Community Governance Review pre-consultation questionnaire – The Clerk provided details and it was agreed to complete the questionnaire at the next meeting.
- d) Polling district & polling place review – There was agreement that the polling station met requirements recorded within the review.
- e) Remembrance service – The Chair agreed to attend the service on behalf of the Parish Council again this year.
- f) Storm damaged tree on the village green – Thanks were expressed to those who had cleared the broken limb from the tree damaged in the recent storm. It was agreed to seek expert opinion on the condition of the remaining tree.

8. Any other business:

- a) Mr Lewins highlighted the poor condition of the public telephone box which was very dirty and had parts missing. It was agreed to approach BT Openreach and request work on the unit.
- b) Mr Rickelton questioned whether the proposal to have a cable underground from the highway to the electric meter cabinet on the edge of the village green was allowed. It was highlighted that the cable would be within the two meter utility area that Northern Powergrid (NPg) as well as providers were allowed lay cables and that NPg had been on site to confirm agreement to proposed work.

9. Date, time and place of next meeting: The next meeting will be on 13 November, 2025 starting at 7.00pm at Elsdon Village Hall. Meeting closed 8.52pm