

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of  
Elsdon Parish Council held in the Village Hall  
on Thursday 8 May, 2014**

**Present:** Councillors Colby (Chair), Maddison, White, Simmance. Clerk Martin Chilvers.

**Apologies:** There were apologies from Cllr Tait.

**Election of Officers for 2014-15**

Cllr Colby was nominated for Chair by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Simmance

Cllr Simmance was nominated for Vice Chairman by Cllr Maddison and seconded by Cllr White

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting – 9 May, 2013:** The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record.

**Summary of the year's activity and questions (Cllr Colby):**

**In progress**

- We have spent a considerable time over the past year working with other residents to hold successful, well attended events under the title of 'Elsdon Past, Present & Future'. These generated a great deal of interest from local people. Following the latest meeting held on 17 March, sub-committees have been formed to work on various identified prioritised projects including the Village Green and the village fete.
- As a Parish Council we have held a number of constructive meetings with representatives of NNPA. It is felt that we have re-established a good working relationship with NNPA, and that we can move forward in a positive way. Volunteer rangers and residents, under the supervision of NNPA rangers; have tidied up both the car park and the pinfold, for which we are very grateful, it is a good start to making the village even lovelier in time for the fete.
- New LED street lights have been erected in the village. After a few teething problems, with some minor adjustments still pending, the lights have now been well accepted, and we await, with bated breath, for the remaining four lights in Crawford Cottages and Crawford Close, to be replaced.
- We have had ongoing contact with NCC during the last 12 months concerning the state of the roads in and around Elsdon. Whilst accepting NCC's financial problems, we are determined that residents and visitors will have safer roads to travel on. There have been several complaints about the suspension and tyre damage that has been suffered. Some progress is being made, but there are still many areas that require attention. Thanks to Chris France I have made contact with Jack Hasson from Hepple Parish Council, and he has added our complaints to those made by Hepple, with particular regard to the road between Billsmoor and Hepple. I am assured that Terry Garnick from NCC is aware of the problems, and as concerned as we all are. Both we and Hepple will continue to monitor any progress over the next few weeks. We look forward to working in partnership with Hepple, and other local Parish Councils in the future.
- We are working with NCC in respect of the necessary repairs to the two southern bridges into the village.
- Thanks to the enormous amount of effort that David Coles has put into improving broadband services, we are now nearer to a resolution than we could have previously only have dreamed.

## Resolution

- Along with Richard Simmance and Margaret Tait, I joined the ranks of Elsdon Parish Council last May, sadly without there being an election. However, much interest was shown by a number of people in the parish and we are very hopeful that, building on this, others will take up the opportunity to stand next time round. There were resignations from Allan Graham, Anne Hall and Chris Armstrong, following many years of great service to the community. It has been a hard act to follow. I was elected Chair, and I am very grateful that Keith agreed to be Vice-Chair. His experience and local knowledge have been invaluable over the last 12 months. I would like, on behalf of myself and the other “newbies” to thank Keith and Ian for the expertise, continuity, support and reassurance that they provided during some difficult moments.
- The underground cabling project caused lengthy disruption throughout the village. The Parish Council become involved and negotiated with National Powergrid (NPG), Morrison Utility Services and NNPA to ensure an eventual successful outcome. We are still working with NPG to seek compensation for the problems experienced by many of the residents and damage to the village green.
- Following the completion of the underground cabling the difficult decision was made to dispense with the damaged community TV system. Whilst this caused distress and had financial implications for a small number of residents, it was impossible for the Parish Council to take on the responsibility for its repair and maintenance once NCC had, without consulting the Parish Council, negated their previous obligations in the matter.
- With the help and cooperation of residents, the Parish Council worked with NCC to ensure that appropriate work was carried out to halt and prevent further erosion to the burn banks to the rear of Crawford Cottages. Thanks go to David Renton for his persistence, and to NCC operatives for a job well done.
- Following NNPA’s award of Dark Sky status, a successful event was held in the village through the hard work of members of the Village Hall Committee. The Parish Council are working with them and NNPA to seek funding for further events and activities in the village.
- As a Parish Council we have received and reviewed six planning applications during the last 12 months.
- Finally, this has been an exciting and educational 12 months for me. They have flown by; it always seems to be the second Thursday of the month. I have learned a great deal about the parish and its environs, its history and its aspirations for the future. I have made new acquaintances and renewed some old ones. I feel that we have achieved a not inconsiderable amount over the last year and look forward to the next. I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for their help and encouragement and humour, Martin for his devotion to duty over and above what is necessary; Sue Bolam and Chris France for their frequent and very supportive attendance, it has been much appreciated by us all; David Coles for the Town Crier that has helped to advertise what is happening at the Parish Council and in the village generally; Robert Arthur for turning up on a regular basis to show his support and offer local knowledge and experience, and to everyone else who has come to our meetings to offer opinions or just to demonstrate solidarity with what we are trying to achieve. Thank you.

## Financial Report:

The Clerk provided a report on the finances from 1 April, 2013 through to 31 March, 2014.

- Opening bank balances totalled £3,915 and closing for the year at £3,154.
- The Precept had been increased from £1,400 to £1,500.
- There had been £958 spent on Parish Plan (Elsdon, Past, Present and Future) events during the year.
- There had been £170 made in donations during the year.
- There was discussion about the funding of the drainage repairs on the village green and it was agreed Cllr White would investigate this further.

**Reports from County Councillor and questions:** Cllr Bridgett was not in attendance. The Clerk was asked to write to him asking for greater contact with the Parish Council.

**Any other business:**

There was discussion regarding the gibbet that has been missing for some time. No one was aware of where it has gone to and the Clerk was asked to write and enquire its whereabouts.

Meeting closed at 8.35pm