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**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, HELD IN HIGHGATE HALL ON TUESDAY 9TH APRIL
2024 COMMENCING AT 6:30 PM**

NOTES

PRESENT: Councillors Tim Cummins, Justin Hawkesford, Malcolm McCann (Vice Chair), Ian Ross (Chair), Jan Speechley, Paul Willson

IN ATTENDANCE: Kerry Rew, Clerk; County Cllr Simon Bywater, District Cllr Marge Beuttell; 11 members of the public

Cllr Ross welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL 2023/24 BY THE CHAIR, CLLR IAN ROSS

Report attached.

2. PRESENTATIONS BY VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

1. Richard Whitticase, Elton Society: Elton Society is a civic society open to all residents. Activities over the past year included quizzes, disco, guided walks, and whist drive. Along with more such events, the upcoming village Open Day on June 23rd was highlighted. This will include open gardens, open studios, refreshments, plant stalls, and vintage car display. More committee members are sought to join the current team.

All residents who have not yet done so were encouraged to sign up to the village email EltonPE8@outlook.com This is now administered by Elton Society (after 7 years of being run by Mark Holman) and distributes news and updates on all things relevant to Elton residents.

2. The Reverend David Parkes, representing a number of organisations: Elton Methodist Chapel is recognised as an important village resource, not only as a place for worship. For more than a year it has run *Hub @ the Chapel* every Wednesday morning. This is registered as a Warm Space and offers refreshments and a warm welcome. Professional foot care is also available by appointment with a registered podiatrist. Every other Wednesday afternoon sees the very successful *Wednesday Welcome* organised by an occupational therapist and originally conceived as a music, singing and social activity for those with dementia and their carers but which has developed to appeal to a much wider audience.

Other activities on offer in the Chapel include weekly Knit & Natter, an art group, walks and talks, and ukulele lessons.

Revd. Parkes advised of the demise of the village WI group after many years due to a lack of members available to run the administration. The group will now join the WI in Wansford.

Representing the volunteers who operate the guardianship of the village defibrillators, Revd. Parkes advised that 4 defibrillators have been installed since

- fundraising began and emphasised the importance of having such a network. A team of volunteers carries out monthly checks to ensure that the units are always operational. Funding is still required for at least another 2 units. The Parish Council was thanked for its financial support in providing replacement batteries and pads.
3. Mark Holman, Church Warden, representing the PCC: The new vicar of All Saints, Revd. Diane Kutar, who took up the post on 7th April was introduced and welcomed. The PCC works to maintain the church building and to make it more useable for wider use. Following the installation of new lighting, forthcoming projects are the installation of a new kitchen, WC's, and improvements to the footpath. As well as coffee mornings and bring and buy sales, the church has hosted concerts and performances by a theatre company, the next of which will be The Wizard of Oz on 24th May.
 4. Nadia Ross, Community Speed Watch: The team comprises of 17 volunteers who in the past year have completed 27 roadside sessions. These sessions achieve tangible results with 193 speeding drivers recorded and notified to Cambridgeshire Constabulary, providing a visible presence to deter speeding. Such detailed information is essential to the Parish Council when applying for funding for traffic calming measures and is key to the success of applications. More volunteers are always welcome to join the group. Special thanks were extended to Terry Walker, a stalwart volunteer since the group first formed in August 2016, who has recently left the village, and to Les Ranford, who transports, sets up, and takes down the equipment for every session.
 5. Short Mat Bowls Club: The group meets regularly on Tuesday afternoons at Highgate Hall and welcomes new members. The first taster session is free, refreshments are provided in a friendly, enjoyable atmosphere.
 6. Kevin Durham, Elton Park Cricket Club: Pitch preparation is ongoing and the first match in Elton Park will take place in early May. Additional fixtures are being planned throughout the season, usually on a Thursday or Friday, with bar and refreshments provided by the Black Horse.

Both District Cllr Marge Beuttell, Huntingdonshire District Council, and Cllr Simon Bywater, Cambridgeshire County Council were thanked for their continued support throughout the year. Both have been instrumental in opposing the proposed plans for the Haddon solar park. Cllr Bywater reiterated concerns regarding the A605 junction and assured residents that he would continue to push for improvements. Cllr Bywater's annual report is attached.

3. MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

1. A resident enquired if there was any intention to improve mobile phone coverage. It was noted that a previous planning application to install a mast had been withdrawn by the prospective provider and no further applications have been received. Cllr Ross noted that the village is now supplied with ultrafast fibre direct to premises by Gigaclear, and now that CityFibre has installed an alternative ultrafast infrastructure other providers will be able to offer competitive alternatives as well.
2. The work done by the Parish Council was acknowledged in appreciation.

Cllr Ross closed the Annual Parish Meeting at 7:30 pm.