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**APPROVED MINUTES OF ELTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN HIGHGATE HALL ON TUESDAY
12TH MARCH 2024 COMMENCING AT 7:30 PM**

PRESENT: Councillors Tim Cummins, Justin Hawkesford, Malcolm McCann, Ian Ross (Chair), Shirley Strowbridge, Brett Walsh, Paul Willson

IN ATTENDANCE: Kerry Rew, Clerk; four members of the public

		ACTION
	Cllr Ross welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
1.	APOLOGIES: Cllr Speechley, Cllr Taylor, County Cllr Bywater, District Cllr Beuttell	
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations of interest in items on the agenda.	
3.	PUBLIC FORUM: 1. Permission was granted to Mr Durham, representing the Elton Cricket Club, to fix posters around the village to announce the start of the cricket season and upcoming fixtures. As a general point the Council requested that weather-damaged, torn, or out-of-date posters should be removed promptly, and consideration given to the overall appearance of the chosen locations to avoid areas becoming unsightly.	
4.	COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' UPDATE: There were no reports from County or District representatives.	
5.	MINUTES OF MEETING 13TH FEBRUARY 2024: Proposed Cllr Walsh, seconded Cllr Willson and APPROVED as a true record.	
6.	FINANCE: 1. The monthly Accounts and Cashflow Update was circulated prior to the meeting and presented by the Clerk. Spreadsheet attached showing income, expenditure, and YTD balance. Clerk will now prepare year end information for internal audit. 2. There were 3 payments presented for authorisation per the Schedule of Payments below. AGREED. A payment of £100.44 (inc delivery and VAT) for the purchase of primer and paint for refurbishment of the telephone kiosk was authorised at the last meeting and made on 8th March and also appears on this schedule.	
7.	PLANNING & PLANNING APPLICATIONS: 1. NNC NE/22/00151/FUL – Halden’s Parkway, Thrapston A virtual meeting of the STAUNCH group was held on 21st February and attended by the Clerk. The planned NNC Planning Committee meeting on 20th March has been postponed without explanation. No rescheduled date has yet been announced. It was noted that there have been no updates to the Newlands’ warehousing applications 22/00441/FUL and 22/0381/FUL at Haddon both of which were withdrawn in April 2023.	

	<p>2. Cllr Walsh is preparing additional environmental and ecological arguments in the expectation of an appeal against the decision to refuse the Haddon Solar Farm development. Applicants have until July 2024 to appeal.</p>	
8.	<p>CORRESPONDENCE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Elton Quarry Local Liaison Group meeting, to be held on 20th February was cancelled due to flooding and has been rescheduled for 11:00 on 26th March. Councillors Ross and Speechley to attend. Any other councillors wishing to attend should contact the Clerk. 2. A resident reported damage to the verge in Hayes Walk due to vehicles driving over the kerb to park on the grass. The matter has been referred to Cambridgeshire Highways and HDC, as parked vehicles will cause problems when grass cutting recommences. 3. The Joint Parishes meeting arranged by Cllr Tim Alban will be held on 20th March and attended by the Chair and Clerk. Inspector Colin Norden of Cambridgeshire Constabulary will be present. Councillors should advise the Clerk of any issues they wish to be raised. 4. Notice was given that the election of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Huntingdonshire will take place on Thursday, 2nd May. Residents are reminded that electors will require photo identification in order to vote. 5. Residents are reminded to register for the HDC garden waste subscription service by 31st March. Green bins that are not registered with the service will not be emptied after that date. 6. Councillors were notified of two virtual courses being run by the Open Spaces Society – <i>Protecting Commons, Greens & Open Spaces</i>, and <i>Protecting Rights of Way</i>. Councillors should contact the Clerk if they wish to attend either. 	<p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
9.	<p>REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS & CLERK</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clerk's report – notifications and updates for information: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Clerk compiled a full report of the information gathered about the benches around the village which was circulated prior to the meeting for review and discussion. In conclusion, the two benches clearly in the ownership of the Parish Council at Hayes Walk and opposite the park gates in Middle Street, will be added to the Asset Register, and will be rubbed down and stained when the weather allows. The bench at St Botolph's Green (ownership unknown) will be assessed for repair or removal. The family of John Crowden to whom the bench in Chapel Lane is dedicated, have given permission for its removal due to its poor condition. ii. There has been no progress on the installation of noticeboard. For the second time CCC Highways' check for utilities used the incorrect co-ordinates for the location. A third search has been requested. An alternative solution has been suggested and will be considered for viability. iii. It was AGREED that councillors willing to have their photographs included on the website would provide a suitable photo to the Clerk, either of their own, or arrange to have one taken. iv. It was noted that water continues to flow down Middle Street from outside Rectory Farm Mews, and it was suggested that the drains were blocked. Gullies were cleaned by CCC Highways' contractors in December 2023. Clerk to report for a second time. Work on the blocked drains and leak from Ailington Leas, Back Lane has still not progressed. The CCC Drainage & Resilience 	<p>ALL</p>

	<p>Team engineer has confirmed that the contractors will be chased for a start date on works.</p> <p>v. Fault reports update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dead rowan on Back Lane – CCC Highways refused request for removal as it is deemed more important as wildlife habitat - Dead elm on Wansford Road will not be removed for the same reason - Overhanging tree branches outside Woodland House/Highgate Hall will not be cut back as not considered problematic - Cllrs Walsh and Speechley to speak with the Environment Agency regarding fly tips in ditches on Oundle Road and in Gated Road gateway at meeting on 4th April. - Dilapidated signs on Highgate Green, Duck Street and Greenhill Road have now been replaced - Series of potholes on Overend near cricket pavilion, repaired - Potholes in Middle Street reported online by the Clerk - Damaged/fallen ‘no through road’ sign in Chapel Lane reported online by the Clerk <p>vi. Clerk has contacted SMV who would be willing to carry out additional repair work and wildflower sowing to compensate for the reduction in grass cutting (now to be carried out by HDC instead). No change to charges for 2024. Both SMV and HDC report that grass cutting is unlikely to start before April due to conditions caused by rain.</p> <p>2. Wildflowers/bio-diversity project – Motion proposed by Cllr Speechley: <i>To purchase ‘Restore & Enrich’ wildflower seed mix from Boston Seeds – 2 x 250g @ £48.00 each for the sum of £96.00 inc VAT. RESOLVED IN FAVOUR.</i> This mix comprising perennials is to boost the mix provided by HDC, which is composed of mainly annuals. HDC will carry out re-sowing on Hayes Walk green and additionally on Highgate Green as agreed in April 2023. Clerk still awaiting confirmation from CCC Highways Officer regarding proposed sowing along Wansford Road and Chapel Lane.</p> <p>3. A605/B671 safety concerns – Cllr Speechley’s work was acknowledged in persisting with attempts to ascertain responsibility for the unlit island beacon light at the junction. A meeting was held on site on 11th March with four members of CCC departments, and Cllrs Bywater and Ross also in attendance. It was acknowledged by CCC that the junction is poorly maintained which compromises visibility and safety. In the short term, signs and bollards will be cleaned. Overgrown vegetation will be cut back, though this may be delayed until later in the year, to avoid the nesting season. Power supply to the bollards will be evaluated and either repaired or replaced. The hatpin sphere <i>should</i> be illuminated, so connection to electrical or solar power will be pursued.</p> <p>The junction is considered to be benign, with relatively few accidents, and (no doubt due to the volume of traffic), cameras show that most vehicles are within the speed limit. Statistically there are insufficient fatalities for the junction to be considered sufficiently dangerous to be a priority and funding for further speed limitation measures will not be considered.</p>	
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	<p>The assistance of Cllr Bywater in progressing this was gratefully acknowledged.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Wansford Road LHI update – Following contact with Highways, Cllr Ross confirmed that location options are still being assessed. 5. Speed Watch/MVAS – latest Speed Watch and MVAS data report (attached) circulated by Cllr Ross prior to the meeting with data from Wansford Road. The sign has been relocated to Overend. Roadside sessions have re-started and continue over the coming weeks. The new solar-powered speed sign will be installed on Wansford Road. 6. Flood Group update – Cllr Speechley has arranged a meeting with volunteers and outside agencies at 10:30 on 4th April. 7. National Landscapes strategy – Cllr Speechley has provided information from the Ecology Hydrology Institute to the committee heading up the application on behalf of the Nene Valley. 8. Reports from councillors – no other updates 	
10.	<p>DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS:</p> <p>ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, to be followed by PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Tuesday, 9th April 2024</p> <p>ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL, to be followed by PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Tuesday, 14th May 2024</p> <p>The meeting closed at 20:48</p>	

DATE	TRANSACTION	PAYEE	DETAILS	TOTAL	
08/03/2024	B/P	X2 Connect Ltd	Primer & paint telephone kiosk	£100.44	Authorised 13/02/24
FOR AUTHORISATION 12/03/24					
12/03/2024	B/P	Ms K Rew	Clerk's salary February 2024	£345.28	
12/03/2024	B/P	Ms K Rew	Clerk's expenses February 2024	£27.30	
12/03/2024	B/P	Parish Council Websites	Annual website hosting & support	£273.60	
				£746.62	