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**APPROVED MINUTES OF ELTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN HIGHGATE HALL ON TUESDAY
14TH JULY 2026 COMMENCING AT 7:30 PM**

PRESENT: Councillors Tim Cummins, Malcolm McCann, Jan Speechley (Chair), Paul Willson

IN ATTENDANCE: Kerry Rew, Clerk; County Cllr Simon Bywater, two members of the public

	Cllr Speechley was nominated to chair the meeting.	ACTION
1.	APOLOGIES: Cllrs Lay, Ross, Strowbridge, Walsh, District Cllr Beuttell	
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	PUBLIC FORUM: There were no comments from members of the public	
4.	COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' UPDATE: Cllr Bywater reported that the announcement regarding Local Government Reorganisation was expected on Thursday 16th July. The anticipated cross-border/multi-agencies meeting about traffic on the A605 is yet to be scheduled with officers unwilling to commit. Cllr Bywater has however been in contact with the new Director for Place & Sustainability. He also reported that he has been liaising with his counterpart at North Northants Council, Cllr Simon Fairhall about footpath MY11 to Warmington Mill He confirmed that a new Highways Maintenance Manager has been appointed. It is hoped he will address the difficulties and frustrations being experienced with the online Highways reporting tool and automatic closure of fault reports.	
5.	MINUTES OF MEETING 9TH JUNE 2026: Proposed Cllr McCann, seconded Cllr Cummins and APPROVED as a true record.	
6.	FINANCE: - The monthly cashflow update was circulated prior to the meeting and presented by the Clerk. The meeting noted that a contribution of £843.69 has been received from Cambridgeshire County Council towards grass cutting of their land throughout the village. - There were two payments presented for authorisation per the schedule below*. AGREED. Since the last meeting there had been six pre-authorised payments: Clerk's salary June, bank charge June, electricity May, 1 x grass cut, tree survey & report, insurance renewal. - Clerk confirmed the renewal of the Parish Council insurance with additional assets now included in the cover.	

	4. The motion from Cllr Speechley: <i>To authorise the allocation of £1000 in the 2026/27 budget towards possible legal costs to oppose the closure of Footpath MY11</i> was deferred until later in the meeting when the matter was discussed in full. See Item 9.1.vi	
7.	PLANNING & PLANNING APPLICATIONS: No planning applications had been received since the last meeting.	
8.	CORRESPONDENCE 1. The meeting noted residents' concerns regarding visitors to the river, litter, and the fire risk caused by barbecues, discarded cigarettes, and glass in the very dry weather. The meeting also noted nuisance bike riding on suspectedly stolen e-bikes, and scooters. Clerk advised that HDC had been contacted for support with bin bags and signage. Elton Estates and Environment Agency also advised. It was acknowledged that little could be done to prevent such behaviour, but it was hoped that repeated reporting to the police would eventually pay off.	
9.	REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS & CLERK 1. Clerk's report – notifications and updates for information: i. The meeting noted that the new benches had not been itemised on the insurance and so the Council was unable to claim for the vehicle damage to the one on Stocks Green. It was agreed that another should be purchased at a replacement cost £337.50 exc VAT. RESOLVED ii. Highways Fault Reports: Potholes on Overend at the end of the Church footpath, and the junction of the A605/B671 have been repaired; the flattened bollard at the A605/B671 junction has been removed though not yet replaced. Potholes on Back Lane and Highgate Green, and Middle Street, the blocked culvert in Duck Street, and the damaged paving in Pages Passage are still open reports. iii. No update from NNC or Elton Estate about collapse of the Willow Brook bank and damaged fencing. iv. The broken fence adjacent to the pumping station at River Lane having been mended is still being used by visitors to access the river with canoes and paddle boards. The Estate has now topped it with barbed wire and added a sign stating it is not a footpath. v. The damaged steps on the footbridge over Willow Brook to the Fotheringhay footpath have been mended by NNC. It has yet to be established why the report was referred to the Environment Agency, resulting in a long delay from the first report on 16th April. vi. Prior to the meeting, the Clerk circulated quotations received from three certified tree surgeons (four were contacted) to conduct the full scope of works required to maintain the trees on the parish-owned village greens per the survey and report obtained. It was AGREED to appoint Woodcraft Tree Services to carry out the work (to include removal of dying lime tree on Stocks Green) at a cost of £1150.00 exc VAT RESOLVED vii. The meeting noted the Parish Council's agreement to use Parish Council public liability insurance cover for a local event taking place to raise funds for the Old Chapel. 2. Wildflowers/bio-diversity project –	

	i. Cllr Speechley reported that growth on Highgate Green with a traditional wildflower mix including poppies has improved but lack of rain will restrict further growth and those sown under the tree are sparse in their success. The sowing on Chapel Lane has largely failed due to the weather. ii. There has still been no contact from HDC's Arboricultural Manager despite chasing using EPC Tree Survey report as example of what EPC is doing to manage and maintain trees on parish-owned greens. iii. Still waiting for CCC response about scanning the verge to establish where it may be suitable for new crab apple trees to be planted. EPC tree survey report forwarded to elicit response. 3. Flood Action Group update i. Cllr Speechley met with representative of Anglian Water Complex Risk Team on 11th June and walked around the village. A CCTV team has been allocated to undertake their own assessment of all foul water pipework in relation to surface water flooding in River Lane prior to the wet weather returning in the autumn. AW to advise on date of work. ii. Island resident still awaiting survey to detail bespoke recommendations to protect property. Chased directly with EA. Quotes to be sought for undertaking work on back channel at the Island as Nene River Trust estimate that design costs for channel could be up to £40,000 to meet terms of Flood Risk Activity Permit, tree work costs approximately £15,000 and undertaking the project could be in excess of £50,000. iii. Nene Rivers Trust visit identified areas near the Mill where there is potential for storage ponds which would slow the flow and give the area more time to deal with the speed of the water coming around the embankment. The Mill pathway that is constantly scoured out could be protected with a leaky dam/fence to protect the path but still allow slow flow of water through. This work would be undertaken collectively by AW, the EA and NRT. iv. CCC chased again about investigation for gully work outside Rectory Farm Mews. 4. Fotheringhay Wetland Creation/ Footpath MY8/MY11 Elton to Warmington Lock Cllr Speechley attended a meeting on 23rd June with North Northants Rights of Way User Group at Kier's offices (contractors for North Northants Council). Also present were representatives of the Ramblers' Association, NNC Highways, NNC Definitive Map team, and Kier Highways. EPC confirmed support for the creation of a wetland and the obvious benefits for biodiversity and flood management but outlined ongoing issues of maintenance and access to the footpath, which would now be intentionally degraded further raising questions of responsibility for long term maintenance and repair. The Temporary Traffic Restriction Order to close the footpath is on hold due to objections and pending information from the Environment Agency and the landowner. Investigations are	
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	taking place into the legal basis on which the proposed closure was predicated. Cllr Speechley proposed the Motion to seek legal advice and/or support the Ramblers' Association: <i>To authorise the allocation of £1000 in the 2026/27 budget towards possible legal costs to oppose the closure of Footpath MY11</i> RESOLVED The Clerk has received multiple reports from residents about the current inaccessibility of footpath MY11 to Warmington. This has been reported to NNC and wider agencies to raise the issue of failure to maintain the footpath irrespective of any proposal to create a wetland. This failure is underlined by the length of time taken to accept responsibility and to carry out the repair of the footbridge on MY8 at Willow Brook. 5. Speed Watch/MVAS – Data reports from the three MVAS were circulated prior to the meeting. The radar sign in Duck Street has been turned to face outbound traffic, and initial results indicate increased compliance with the 20-mph speed limit. Cllr McCann enquired whether the sign could be moved from Highgate Green to Middle Street. A suitable mounting post needs to be identified, and permission sought from Highways as there is currently no permitted location on Middle Street. A resident reported perceived speeding on Wansford Road during the early hours. Data reports to be checked. 6. Reports from Councillors i. Cllr McCann requested that the verge outside Pembroke Cottage, Middle Street should be added to the grass cutting schedule. Clerk to confirm with contractor. Apple tree also to be reported to Highways as this is now reaching into the power lines.	
10.	DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Tuesday, 8h September 2026 The meeting closed at 20:25	

Approved payments since last meeting		
PAYEE	DETAILS	TOTAL
R J Flower Contracting T/A Prestige Landscapes	Grass cutting 21.06.26	£474.00
SSE Energy	Electricity supply May 2026	£71.56
Unity Trust Bank	Service charge June 2026	£7.00
Ms K Rew	Clerk's salary June 26	
Peace Arboriculture	Tree Survey & Report	£395.00
Community First Insurance	Insurance renewal	£483.21
*Payments for authorisation this meeting		
Ms K Rew	Clerk's expenses June 26	£20.70
Cllr Speechley	Meeting travel expenses	£40.15