

**Wilby Parish Council**  
www.wilbyparishcouncil.gov.uk

**MINUTES**  
18<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Chairman:**  
Stephen Borrett  
Tel: (07484 265271)

**Clerk:**  
Vicky Smith  
(01604 812239) Email: clerk@wilbyparishcouncil.gov.uk

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at Wilby Parish Church**  
**Present: Cllrs Borrett, Thompson, Stevenson.**  
**Clerk, Mrs Vicky Smith**

50/23	<b>Opening Procedures</b>	ACTION
	<p>a.) Apologies were received and approved from Cllr Harland, Hodges, Stroud, Billington-Hughes. NNC Cllrs Lawman, Brown, Hallam. Quorate at 3 council members</p> <p>b.) There were no declarations of interest expressed</p> <p>c.) The minutes of the ordinary meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 were approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the chairman.</p>	
51/23	<p><b>Public Time</b> No public present</p>	
52/23	<p><b>Reports</b></p> <p>(a) Clerk: <b>Members were reminded to revisit the code of conduct: treat all with respect and courtesy: there are emotive issues to be resolved.</b></p> <p>SID – returning to Mears Ashby after Easter</p> <p>DATES: internal audit meeting booked 16/5/24 at 3pm Keir/Highways meetings: dates attached to agenda Training dates circulated Lunchdown lowdown 23<sup>rd</sup> April re Annual meeting (£10)</p> <p><b>STREETLIGHTS</b> Have now all been converted to LED and photocells changed for 11. SSE processing the change to unmetered supply (3 stages). LP12 on Main Road still not working after 5months. Awaiting examination by National Grid re voltage problem. Clerk chasing as a matter of urgency but does not have direct contact (via streetlight maintenance contractor E-on Energy Solutions) Quarterly maintenance fee revised to £65 (from £112) wef 010124 – check bill 3 Truefotce LED lamps remain in stock at E-on.</p> <p>UPDATE ON SAFE CROSSING PETITION – see Unitary Councillor report</p> <p>WILBY SCHOOL RELOCATION: see item 54/23</p> <p>WILBY PARK: nothing further to report</p> <p>DYLS CONSULTATION – see Unitary Councillor report</p> <p>PLR attempting to engage with PCSO re parking obstruction at Main Rd/M-A Rd junction.</p> <p>SPRINGS on Main Road: see Unitary Councillor report</p>	

FUTURE OF WEBSITE: Cuttlefish now engaged and actively modernizing the look and some of the functionality of the PC website.  
PAYMENT OF PAYE: set up on line and being paid manually NB LOG-IN and check (accrues at approx. £5 per month)

**Correspondence dealt with in the period:**

Allotment enquiries  
Request from Trevor Higgs to join Grendon solar farm action group  
Request for a donation to Cransley hospice  
Stickers for dog bins (handed to Cllrs Stephenson and Thompson to be affix to bins as discussed)  
CPRE membership info  
Advices from DCK payroll that monthly fee will increase from £12 to £15

**(b)NNC: Apologies presented from all councillors. Following report received from Cllr Lora Lawman: Double Yellow Lines, Mears Ashby Road:**

*I understand the determination of the DYLS was deferred whilst the future of the school was confirmed. With that confirmed, we were able to proceed. The final decision is still under review following comments received during the consultation (which is required in order to determine the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders). Whilst we cannot formally reconsult the Parish Council at this stage, it may help if you can confirm that the area highlighted in yellow below is the section where they wish to have DYLS.*

*If we have a clear idea of what the PC wishes, NNC can consider that alongside the other comments we have received and reach a decision.*

**Safe Crossing to Sainsburys:**

*Regarding the potential pedestrian crossing , NNC commissioned a high-level feasibility report for a crossing at Wilby near to Sainsburys. We have received a draft report from the consultants. We have responded with some clarification questions and once they have been resolved, we will be able to consider the proposals, and discuss them with the Executive Member and with the local NNC Members, it is hoped that will be possible during April or May.*

**Springs on Main Road:**

*Raised with Asst. Director. Wilby not alone in this after recent heavy rains. Water and flood officer is working on this, together with Highways partners. Update awaited*

**Open consultations:**

Air quality: <https://northnorthants.citizenspace.com/place-and-economy/local-air-quality-strategy-have-your-say/>  
Rough Sleepers: <https://northnorthants.citizenspace.com/cet/nn-homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-strategy/>  
LCWIPs - Local Cycling and Walking infrastructure Projects: I attended a couple of weeks ago a meeting that is to put forward into a plan the cycling and walking infrastructure . I raised on behalf of all villages in the ward that there is an absence of routes for all and little connectivity.  
NNC to receive funding for EV charging points: <https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/news/nnc-set-receive-nearly-ps3m-electric-vehicle-infrastructure>  
NNC to start food waste collections in 2026: <https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/news/roll-out-food-waste-collections-across-north-northants-executive-agenda>  
Grants for rural businesses: <https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/news/grants-ps50000-rural-businesses-available>  
Grants for energy saving businesses: <https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/news/grants-businesses-looking-reduce-carbon-emissions-launched>

**(c)Cllrs' Special interest:**

**WPFT:** from H Vancliffe:

*Following our successful capital grant application, we have completed one part of the project- the replacement of the safety surfaces under the 2 sets of swings and the spinner. To fully comply with safety regulations we need to raise the height of the older children's swings. As the chains are the shortest they can be (due to using the highest type of link), and as the seats are beginning to crack, we will be replacing the 2 swings and chains.*

*Although the swings were out of action for a couple of weeks, I'm sure you will agree the surfaces are looking much better. And are safer.*

*This coming week we are starting on replacing the garage, the second part of the funding. Again the area will be cordoned off. We are using a Wilby based builder. And we hope you will agree the garage will look much better and be much safer than in its current condition.*

	<p><i>We are again monitoring the cracks caused by subsidence related to the field maple next to the pavilion. Once we know the extent of the movement, we will discuss options with the Tree Officer as the tree is protected. At that point we will look for funding to carry out any works and make good the cracks on the inside of the pavilion.</i></p> <p><i>We have also had some additional repairs carried out to the wooden climbing frame.</i></p> <p><b>SAVE THE DATE: WILBY FEST 2024: 30<sup>th</sup> June</b></p>						
53/23	<p><b>To further determine the procurement of Defibrillator(s) for the village</b></p> <p>Been under consideration for many months (on &amp; off) as well as a presentation at a previous PC meeting pre-COVID. A resident has now approached the PC suggesting 2 are installed (The Horseshoe &amp; WMC/Trakomend). This cannot be resolved tonight and sadly the resident who was invited to join us is unable to be here. To be progressed this requires a committed working group of 3 or 4 interested people (Residents/Councillors) to be formed to work through all the issues and present proposals to a future PC meeting where final decisions can be made.</p> <p><b>ISSUES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How many defibrillators can be sourced?</li> <li>- What Grants are available?</li> <li>- How much matched funding is needed?</li> <li>- How will matched funding be raised/found?</li> <li>- Where will the unit(s) go?</li> <li>- Have the identified site(s) agreed to act as host?</li> <li>- What else is needed at the site(s)?</li> <li>- Who will pay the ongoing electrical costs?</li> <li>- How much is cost to install?</li> <li>- How much is cost to maintain?</li> <li>- What maintenance is needed, how often &amp; by whom?</li> <li>- How will ongoing maintenance costs be met?</li> <li>- Who will overall manage this to ensure all registration etc required is completed and managed into the future?</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To place an advertisement/appeal to the village via the PC &amp; Village websites and noticeboard for volunteers to come forward to join this group. Chairman and clerk will attempt to get this initiative started. The Clerk has very kindly volunteered to take the minutes of the Working Group should one be formed, and I consider it important that the Group includes motivated Residents as well as Parish Counsellors given the scope of what is being proposed.</p>	CLERK					
54/23	<p><b>To consider the proposal to fund a commemorative plaque for the school building</b></p> <p>At the site of Wilby School commemorating its location: 1864 – 2024.</p> <p>Investigate cost of plaque and installation and present to future meeting aim to put up during the summer holidays</p> <p>Current intent is the building will be kept of educational purposes per Diocese of Peterborough especially here where the building is an integral part of the church yard.</p> <p>Clerk to seek alternatives available (National Heritage?)</p>	CLERK					
55/23	<p><b>To receive a report from the Solar Farm Workshop and to determine the Council's response</b></p> <p>See report from recent developer workshop attended by Cllr Thompson and Mrs Smith: Appendix A</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To liaise with LL/M-A/and other local action group</p> <p>Anyone wishing to express a view at this stage to so directly to ward councillor Lawman or to developers Greenhill Solar via their website: <a href="http://www.greenhillsolar.co.uk">www.greenhillsolar.co.uk</a></p>						
56/23	<p><b>FINANCIAL/ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS</b></p> <p>a) Received balance at bank: £7254.59</p> <p>b) Receipts and Payments were authorised as follows:</p> <p><b>Receipts:</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">07/02/24</td> <td style="width: 30%;">HMRC</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Credit</td> <td style="width: 20%;">VAT reclaim</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;"><b>£1,277.81</b></td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Payments:</b></p>	07/02/24	HMRC	Credit	VAT reclaim	<b>£1,277.81</b>	
07/02/24	HMRC	Credit	VAT reclaim	<b>£1,277.81</b>			

				Gross	VAT	Power
07/03/2024	SSE/SWALEC	DD	Electricity Dec	<b>£90.69</b>	£4.32	Streetlights Act 1957
26/02/2024	E.on Energy Solutions	UTB	Supply & install new photocells	<b>£422.40</b>	£70.40	"
26/02/2024	E.on Energy Solutions	UTB	New LP 4 Brook Vale	<b>£366.00</b>	£61.00	"
20/03/2024	HMRC	UTB	PAYE Ers Feb	<b>£5.20</b>	£0.00	LGA 72 s. 111/112
20/03/2024	HMRC	UTB	PAYE Ers March	<b>£5.00</b>	£0.00	"
31/03/2024	UTB	UTB	Bank charges quarterly in arrears	<b>£18.00</b>	£0.00	"
18/03/2024	Church Fund	UTB	Donation re hire of church	<b>£25.00</b>	£0.00	"
<p>c)<b>Reserves:</b> Records show WPC bank account holds £1400 earmarked for contested election reserve if required (in 2025). The need to start a streetlight reserve from May 2025 onwards was noted</p> <p>d)<b>Accounts summary</b>  There are 4 sections over budget (by approximately £700 in total)  1. Hire of Hall reflecting the extra meeting we had regarding the school closure - £25 over  2. Payroll - £10 over  3. PAYE &amp; NI which we didn't budget for and ended up paying £102.60 owing to the Clerk's salary / tax position.  4. Street Light Maintenance accounts for most of the rest of the [managed as previously agreed at and minuted] overspend: unexpected electrical safety certificate (£810); investment in up-upgrades of remaining 13 streetlights to LED and the change of 11 photocells fore lights to switch off between midnight and 5.30am. Savings made will result in savings in reduced energy consumption going forward. £1041 paid to replace a lamppost was reimbursed by insurance claim.</p> <p>e)<b>Pre insurance process:</b> insurers's pre-renewal questionnaire considered. No changes required.</p> <p>f) <b>Electricity contract:</b> Confirm no notice is required to leave existing contract as same supplier. Revised unmetered supply certificate now forward to SSE re recent changes to streetlights. Adjustment to billing awaited.</p>						
<b>57/23</b>	<p><b>To consider new planning applications:</b>  No notifications received  Permitted development consultation : resolved for individuals to respond as they see fit prior to closing date of 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024</p>					
There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20:45 hrs						

**Next meeting date:**

**Ordinary Parish Council Meeting, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 19:30, Wilby Parish Church**

**Chairman.....**

**Date.....**

*N.B. These minutes are in draft format until formally approved and signed by the Chairman*

**APPENDIX A**

**REPORT ON GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM WORKSHOP 5/3/2024**

This is a proposal by Island Green Power to build a 500MW Solar Farm over several sites in a corridor between Northampton and Wellingborough. Sites will include solar panels and battery storage. Maps are available on the Green Hill Solar Farm website, but I have attached the one relating to Mears Ashby / Earls Barton as it has the most impact on Wilby.

Figures

The Government is looking for 70GW of solar capacity by 2035, so 500MW would provide approximately 0.7% of this target (if my maths is right) .

- 950 hectares – They will rent the land from landowners, not buy it.
- Covers 7 separate sites. The two largest are Mears Ashby to Earls Barton and a Grendon, Easton Maudit and Bozeat.

- Across 10 parishes including Wilby – although the bit in Wilby parish is all north of the spinney half way between Wilby and Mears Ashby.

#### Why Here?

Because of the Grendon sub-station, which has been identified as having capacity for 500MW. The maximum range from the sub-station is 20km.

#### Planning Process

Because of the size of the project, the local authority does NOT make the decision (although they are a consultee). The decision is taken by “Development Consent Order”, which effectively means the Government i.e. Secretary of State.

#### Timeline

Currently they are preparing reports and having non-statutory consultations.

Sept to Oct 2024 – Statutory Consultations

Feb 2025 – Submit Development Consent Order

2027 - Start construction

Build time – About 2 years.

Site Life –60 years at which time the site will be decommissioned (doubt that will bother any of us!)

#### Reports

Reports they have to complete include

- **Environmental** – Impact on hedgerows, woodland, bats, newts etc. Opportunity to improve opportunities for wildlife around the site by increasing field margins or planting wildflower meadows.
- **Cultural Heritage** – Impact on listed buildings, scheduled sights. Archeological reports required.
- **Landscape / Visual** – Minimising the visual impact by enhancing hedges, placing panels in the least visible parts of sites. Re-routing footpaths to more aesthetically pleasing routes. NB the sites would be surrounded by high metal fencing.
- **Transport Access** – Which routes to use to access sites. Decide size and number of vehicles. Minimise inconvenience to residents.
- **Water** – Flood risk assessment. Drainage strategy. Ensure water quality maintained.
- **Socio Economic** – Impact on local businesses, employment, rights of way
- **Community Benefit** – There is no statutory S106 of CIL money to be paid, but the developers would pay towards local projects either on or off site.

#### The Meeting

There was a mix of unitary and parish councilors (15 – 20 people)

Presentations by 6 (I think) people were professional. Questions were mostly answered reasonably clearly.

The mood of the audience was generally hostile to the scheme. Main points of objection were:-

- Too large
- Loss of visual amenity of open countryside
- Loss of top grade farmland
- Significant impact on Mears Ashby in particular
- Loss of farmland (although sheep could graze around the panels)
- Construction traffic
- Problem getting power cables over / under the Nene, which wasn't really answered.

Cllr George Thompson

