

MINUTES OF LONG SUTTON & WELL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 29 JULY 2021

Present: Cllrs Nick Trew, Chair (NT), Jim Goodbourn Vice Chair (JG), Mark Bartlett (MB) & Roger Bright (RB).

In Attendance: Susan Richardson (Parish Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer)

Also present: Three members of the public.

10/21 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Sophie Radcliffe (SR), HDC Cllrs Kennett & Crookes.

11/21 To receive declarations of interest and requests for dispensation relating to any item on the agenda.

None.

12/21 Public Session

(a) Two members of the public in attendance and another via email requested an update on Big Meadow. **It was agreed** to address Agenda Item 15/21 (e)(i) now.

The last meeting LS&WPC facilitated with ME Developments, Hart DC and some adjacent residents held on May 18th principally addressed concerns that the landscaping did not meet the levels specified in the planning consent. ME's response was that this was 'work in progress' and had not been completed. The trigger point is 'prior to occupation of the third dwelling on site.' As such ME are required to lay out the public open space prior to occupation not prior to sale of Plot 3.

HDC Enforcement Officers are engaged with ME attempting to persuade them to resolve matters. Parish and District Councillors and Planning Management are all aware of the current situation at the site. As the development is ongoing and the trigger points for the landscaping, as set out in the legal agreement for the site, have not been reached there is not currently a breach of planning control regarding the landscaping. An Officer from Hampshire Highways visited the village to investigate the flooding concerns and whilst he was sympathetic could not recommend improving the drainage in The Street. He felt the soakaway arrangements in the meadow were not adequate and confirmed he would report it to his 287 team with no assurance anything could be done. Water on to the highway is acceptable but not silt. Currently the drains under the road show no silt build up but, if they became silted up with silt washed from the meadow it will be the responsibility of whoever owns the meadow. HDC and/or LS&WPC have, within the legal agreement, two years before accepting ownership of the meadow.

Whilst LS&WPC remain engaged with Hart planning to ensure that the development is completed to the landscaping NMA, it must be understood that, as a consultee the PC has no powers to expediate the development

(b) The Chairman welcomed to the meeting, and also to the village, a new parishioner who recently moved into Wingate Meadow and whose planning application is listed for discussion later 21/01653/HOU under 15/21 (d).

13/21 Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED. The minutes of the previous full Council meeting held on 27 May (01/21 to 09/21) were agreed as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

14/21 FINANCE

(a) RESOLVED.

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- (i) The current Financial Statement, Payments & Receipts as presented in Appendix One were agreed and approved.
- (ii) The Notice of Public Rights YE 31 March 2021 was noted starting on 1st of July ending on Wednesday 11th August.

LS&WPC meets the criteria to claim exemption from an External Auditor review under the limited assurance regime. However, **it was agreed** that as YE 2021 documents had already been submitted exemption would not be claimed this YE but reviewed ahead of YE 2022.

15/21 PLANNING

- (a) **21/01522/HOU Woodlark, Manor Farm, Woodhill Lane, Long Sutton** for erection of fencing and canopy (retrospective). **It was agreed** the PC would offer no objection to the 'canopy' but object to the 1.8m lap fencing finding itself sympathetic to the views of the Assistant Conversation Officer.
- (b) **21/01441/HOU Well Farm Cottage, Well** for creation of new road access and hard standing. **It was agreed** to object to this planning application, the following comment was submitted
"Long Sutton & Well Parish Council objects to this application, on the grounds that the removal of 4 metres of a historic wall at the front of a property in the heart of the Well Conservation Area would be significantly damaging to the traditional streetscape and adversely impact the appearance of the area as a whole. While the PC acknowledges the applicant's arguments about the difficulties of using the existing vehicle access to the property it does not consider they are such as to outweigh the conservation damage which would be caused by the removal of a significant section of wall. The PC suggests that the applicant should instead consider ways of improving the sight lines of the existing access."
- (c) **21/01681/AMCON 2 Well Manor Farm Cottage, Well** for variation Condition 1 (Approved Plans) attached to 18/02076/AMCON to allow substitution of drawings to show pitched roof as an alternative to the approved flat roof. **It was agreed** to object to the proposed pitch roof and proposed rooflight as well as reiterating the PC's previous concerns of piecemeal applications.
- (d) **21/01653/HOU 3 Wingate Meadow, Long Sutton** for installation of a garage door to the existing carport. **It was agreed** to offer no objection.
- (e) Other planning matters;
 - (i) To receive report on Big Meadow – addressed and report under Item 12/21(a).

16/21 Recreation Ground, Playground

The Annual Safety Report conducted on 21 May 2021 and circulated to all PC members, highlighted low-risk areas for review; two areas of flooring, tighten of bolts on the agility trail. Due to the age of various playground stations, there are general areas of corrosion and natural splits/shakes in the timbers throughout. **It was agreed** to go back to the ROSPA inspector gently pointing out that all the concerns raised in 2020, relating to the cableway, have been addressed. Weekly Covid-19 inspections will now be replaced by monthly inspections under SR's guidance, as Lead Councillor.

It was agreed to engage the services of Mark Seward to prune the soft fruit trees, within the Millennium Orchard. Last year's charges were £47.00 and without sight of a quotations a slight increase would be acceptable.

17/21 Highways, SID & Parish Lengthsman

Cllr Selina Coburn posted on Facebook details of upcoming roadworks (9th August - 24 August)

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by Junction 5 of the M4 with overnight closures. **It was agreed** to upload this to the website blog via the website. The battery has recently been changed in the SID. **It was agreed**, before the September PC meeting, to download the data software to the PC laptop enabling data to be analysed. The Lengthsman visited the village on 2 July where various tasks were carried out.

18/21 Footpaths & Bridleways - No report received from the Footpath Warden.

19/21 LWC Liaison & OGCC Agreement

JG will hold initial discussions with LWC, through the Bursar, regarding the Licence to Occupy which is due to expire on 14 December 2022. **It was agreed** an evaluation of the costs and value to the Parish -v- the costs of insurance, pavilion maintenance, safety inspections, ageing playground equipment and flooring, ageing tennis/netball court and grass & tree maintenance must be objectively reviewed.

The current Hire Agreement with OGCC ends on 30 September 2021. OGCC are yet to provide, as promised (a) EICR Certificate* following an Electrical Fixed Wire Inspection, (b) Certificate of Annual PAT Testing, (c) Proof of fire risk assessment report with sight of equipment recommendation. The Clerk reiterated her concerns to members that as The Licensee LS&WPC, under Clause 3.1.17, is required to insure the building against loss or damage due to fire. The lack of a current EICR, risks any successful insurance claim and, therefore, public funds. (**An EICR is a legal requirement for any organisation to ensure compliance with legal requirements.*)

20/21 LSPS - Nothing of significance to report.

21/21 Report on Crime

Nothing Long Sutton related although activity nearby; small plant stolen from building sites and/or properties with major home improvements going on. Heating oil stolen from property in South Warnborough, drone activity around RAF Odiham and theft of a diesel generator.

22/21 Any Other Business (Information Only)

(a) Vivid Homes

Following lack of ground maintenance concerns raised by a parishioner, the Clerk met with the Vivid Neighbourhood Officer covering Chaffers Close & Hesters View. The grass verges and communal areas had been cut at the time of the meeting (26/07). The delay being due to a backlog of maintenance works and workforce availability. Obviously, since March 2020 continuity of everything has been limited. Residents, should they be concerned, are encouraged to contact Vivid directly if they have any maintenance concerns.

(b) RAF Odiham

SR advised members, via email, that the new 'yellow landing poles' at the RAF base have been installed to accommodate larger aircraft landings. There is some uncertainty, however, if the runway at RAF Odiham could accommodate larger aircrafts. In theory the poles should fade over time.

(c) HDAPTC Meeting, 13 July

NT attended the meeting as the LS&WPC's representative, which was lightly attended by 8 parishes. NT took the opportunity to raise awareness on the solar farm topic. The draft HDAPTC minutes reflect the following;

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“Nick Trew explained the parish are not against green energy but are highlighting the potential issue of the cumulative effect of solar farm pre-applications being approved without an Environmental Impact Assessment that is required for 50+ MW solar farms. Pre-applications for solar farms are 49.9 MW and so are below the 50 MW threshold that allows the local planning authority to approve. There is concern the number of 49.9 MW solar farm applications will be looked at in isolation rather than the cumulative picture. Long Sutton could end up with two thirds of the village being surrounded by solar farms. Nick Trew has drafted a letter to Ranil Jayawardena, local Member of Parliament for North-East Hampshire and is reaching out for other parish/town councils to also sign the letter if they are in agreement with the content. The letter will be shared with the parish and town councils once Nick Trew has finalised the content. Meyrick Williams asked for a copy of the draft letter for discussion at their next parish council meeting. Further points were highlighted that questioned why you would have green energy when you are building on green land; and why would you use grade one, two and three land that is prime food producing land for solar farms. CPRE are putting in their own solar farm policy and Alastair Clark will follow up.

The letter which had not been circulated to full Parish Council, beforehand, can be viewed in Appendix Two. The Clerk advised that, in her role as Clerk & RFO both Rotherwick and South Warnborough, the draft letter discussed at the HDAPTC meeting had not yet been received.

NT advised that some 21 members of the public joined the SOL Action Group on an organised walk to review the proposed site for the solar farm and to get a better idea of the impact of the scheme.

Post Meeting Note: The Clerk asked the Chairman to copy clerk@longsutton.com in on all correspondence sent on behalf of the PC. All correspondence from the Parish Council, must be approved by all Members and must come from the Proper Officer (As per adopted LS&WPC’s Standing Orders 15 b x. The avoidance of process risks the value of historic information being available to members and officers who follow us.

(d) Prospective AONB

Part of an email received by NT and RB from HDC’s Cllr John Kennett was read out to the members.

“Following a presentation by CPRE which would like to explore Last night I went to a small presentation by CPRE which would like to explore the potential for having our part of Hampshire declared a National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This would not halt development but would act as a further filter to screen out poor or mass developments. It is likely to be a lengthy process overseen by Natural England but DEFRA would have to sign off on it. Presumably, there would be some opposition from some farmers who would like to sell land for development and of course by the big developers themselves.

NT was asked to circulate the email to all Members and Clerk for inclusion.

Post Meeting Note: Odiham PC will host a presentation on the proposal for protection of the countryside of North Hampshire on August 24th. Following which LS&WPC can decide whether to request a session for our own parish to communicate the information directly to parishioners.

23/21 To Discuss Confidential Business

24/21 Date of next meeting confirmed as 23 September 2021.

Chairman

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APPENDIX ONE - Agenda Item 14/21 (a)(i)

BANK RECONCILIATION to 30 June 2021

	£
<u>Lloyds Bank PLC</u>	
Treasurers Account	17,308.88
Instant Saver Account	8,387.55
Sink Fund	9,104.87
TOTAL CASH	34,801.30

PAYMENTS & RECEIPTS to 30 June 2021

Payments

Supplier	Services/Goods	£
Andrew Trimmer	Repair Festival of Britain 1951 Noticeboard	300.00
Susan Richardson	Tree Guards (Amazon)	19.30
Flyte so Fancy	Floating Duck Lodge	1,034.95
GK Benford & Co.	1 Green Waste Facility	45.00
ROSPA	Annual Safety Inspection (playground)	94.80
Dick Randall	Quoted playground flooring repairs & refurbishment	801.60
HALC	2021-2022 Affiliation Fee	243.71

Receipts

		£
Topsoil UK Limited	Donation to Village Project (Duck House)	1,000.00

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APPENDIX TWO - Agenda Item 22/21(c)

Dear Ranil,

In addition to our previous correspondence on the Long Sutton solar farm pre-application, we are grateful to the Secretary of State for his decision to reconsider the requirement for a formal EIA for the prospective solar farm planning application itself. Notwithstanding that no formal EIA decision is yet forthcoming in this particular case, it does not address fundamental solar farm planning issues facing many Parish and Town Councils throughout England.

The National Planning Policy Framework stipulates that Local Plans should set out an "overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development" covering a number of areas, including energy. Yet Hart's Local Plan is remarkably "light" on this issue, relying instead on references to an Energy Opportunities Plan within the North Hampshire Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Development Study. But this study is 10 years old, focuses heavily on wind power, biomass and district heating systems and is woefully out of date. Nor does it appear to give any indication of preferred sites for solar farm installations within the area.

Hart District Council are by no means unique among English District Councils for solar farms not having been taken into account when their Local Plans were agreed and with respect, this now requires leadership and guidance from central government on this urgent issue as it relates to the cumulative effect of solar farm development going unchecked.

Therefore, Ranil, we wish to kindly request that you approach The Right Honourable Robert Jenrick, Secretary of State, with a view to the Government urgently passing a Statute limiting substantive solar farm development within the countryside to, for example, a radius of greater than 5 miles apart from the nearest substantive development and not in any case, to the detriment of towns and villages where there are substantial footpath networks and visual impact.

Ranil, of course, such Statute will not be enacted until sufficient debate is held and voted upon, so this letter doesn't propose to micro manage this but urgent action is now required to protect our countryside and food producing land due to policy that is not up to date, with fast moving cumulative solar planning activity currently going unchecked; always bearing in mind that applications greater than 50MW's are deemed as National Infrastructure projects with much greater planning criteria and are determined by the Secretary of State. Applications below 50MW fall to be considered by the local planning authority under the Town and Country Planning legislation. Cynically, a proliferation of applications of 49.9MW's each are currently occurring, in some cases, within sight of each other; and yet there are no planning rules to properly take account of any cumulative effects.

Each of these 49.9MW solar farms typically requires approximately 100 hectares of land - 260 acres - and their visual impact on the undulating rural landscape of this part of North East Hampshire can be very considerable.

We would be grateful if you could please address this with the Secretary of State as a matter of urgency and ideally, personally promote this as a Bill for the protection and well-being of rural England. There are many ideal locations, for example beside motorways, with good grid connectivity sufficient to meet solar output requirements.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Trew

Chairman, Long Sutton & Well Parish Council

Chairman