

## WANBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Wanborough Parish Council held on **23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015** in Wanborough Village Hall, High Street, Wanborough at 19.30.

**PRESENT:** Mr G Sumner (Chairman), Mr C Offer (Vice-Chairman), Mr D Hayward, Mr C Hayes, Mr W J Smith, Mr P Warensjo, Mrs D Stalker, Mr D Kevern, Mr B Biggs

**In Attendance** Mrs A J Raymond (Clerk), 26 members of Public.

- 1 Apologies: Mr A Bennett, Mr R Whitfield
- 2 Declaration of interest: David Hayward and Colin Hayes declared a personal interest in item 7.2 as they each rent an allotment. Donna Stalker declared a prejudicial interest on planning application S/15/0128 (item 6.1) as she is the owner. Joe Smith declared a prejudicial interest on the proposed solar farm (item 7.4.3) at Horpit junction as he is the landowner
3. Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015 were circulated to all Parish Councillors. The minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true record.
4. Presentation from Green Hedge Renewables in relation to their proposal for a Solar Farm at Inlands Farm

Two representatives from Green Hedge Renewables attended the meeting to give a presentation on the proposed Solar Farm at Inlands Farm. The main points from the presentation are as follows:-

- Swindon Borough Council have recently gone through a process to call for sites from landowners for solar panel farms; they have received interest from 29 sites. Swindon Borough Council have now put these sites forward for a six week consultation which ends on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015.
- The site covers 86 acres and will produce enough electricity to power 4,000 homes
- There are footpaths that cross over the site. None of these footpaths will close, however they will have to be fenced in.
- It is proposed to offer £12,000 a year or £120,000 lump sum for local community use.
- In order to make the site financially viable the whole area marked on the map would have solar panels installed.
- The site will not have a change of use as part of the application. It is planned that the solar panels will be there for a period of 25 years, after this time the land will revert back to agricultural use.

Questions raised by residents and Parish Council: -

Q: A resident who lives at Moorleaze asked if there would be any reflection from the solar panels and whether the panels would be seen from the road

A: *The solar panels are designed to absorb light not reflect and it is also intended to plant more hedgerows along the boundary of the field.*

Q: A resident stated that the area around Moorleaze floods considerably and concreting the field will cause more problems for flooding.

A: *The field will not be concreted over; the solar panels will either have a spike that will go into the ground and in 90% of cases this is how the solar panels are installed. In areas of archaeological interest, instead of the spike in the ground, there will be a*

*small concrete footing. A flood evaluation will have to be carried out as part of the plans therefore the proposal will not make the flood issues in the area any worse.*

Q: A resident asked if they have carried out a glint and glare survey

A: *This had not been done yet, but if Swindon Borough Council agree to this site then it will form part of their submission.*

Q: A resident who lives in Church Road, Upper Wanborough, and looks down on the site, stated that the proposed solar panel site will have an adverse effect on the view from Upper Wanborough and also the Conservation Area.

A: *It was confirmed that there will be an impact on the view, however the view from Upper Wanborough will be of the side of the solar panels rather than the front of the panels.*

A member of the public from the Wilts Canal Trust, raised a concern that the proposed route of the Wilts and Berks Canal in the SBC Local Plan is supposed to go across the site that is proposed for the solar panels. The member of public provided Parish Council with a map and asked that they consider this when making their comments to SBC.

Q: Concerns were raised about the view from the AONB and Conservation Area as the site borders both areas.

A: *SBC will assess the impact on these areas before they decide on which site they will agree; it will be up to the Conservation Officer at SBC to carry out this assessment.*

Q: A discussion took place about the impact of the site due to some of the site being on a hillside, so will be viewed from all around. A question was asked whether it would be possible to just put the solar panels on the flat part of the site.

A: *At the moment the whole site only is being considered, to make the site financially viable, but there is no reason why a smaller scheme could not be considered.*

Q: A resident asked questions in relation to the company and what will happen if the company were to go bust during the period of 25 years.

A: *Details were provided about the company's background, including involvement in others sites. There will be a legally-binding supply document and the plan is to gain interest from a pension company for the site.*

A resident stated that a legal document still does not protect anyone from a company going bust.

Q: A resident asked if there would be any compensation for the houses that will be impacted from this proposal.

A: *There would not be any compensation, which is the same as if a housing development was granted permission next to your property.*

Q: Questions were raised in relation to when construction would start and how the construction traffic will enter the site.

A: *If SBC agree to the site, installation of the solar panels would be planned to commence as soon as possible. The construction period is likely to be around 3 months. All lorries to the site will come from the Commonhead Roundabout and then onto site.*

Q: A resident asked if there will be any noise from the solar panels

A: *The panels do not produce any noise. There would be two stations and 11 transformers which do produce a low level noise, but these stations will be located away from any houses; a location in The Marsh was suggested.*

Q: A resident asked what they have done so far and what will they be doing to consult with neighbouring properties of this site.

A: *The sites went public for the first time in the middle of February, so this meeting is the first chance to talk to residents in the area. Contact details were provided so that further questions could be asked.*

Gary Sumner confirmed that Parish Council will ensure that all residents are notified of this proposal via a newsletter.

Q: A resident raised concerns about the solar panels spoiling the natural beauty as you approach the village and asked if grass would grow under the panels.

A: *It was confirmed that grass will grow under the panels, which is why it is still possible to graze sheep in the same area.*

Q: A resident wanted to clarify that as a resident they need to make their comments to SBC before any further details are supplied such as the Glint & Glare survey, flood evaluation survey etc.

A: *The consultation for all the sites put forward to SBC ends on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015. Once SBC agrees that the site is suitable to go forward this will be when the applicant will have to provide further details as part of their submission, such as the surveys mentioned. Once the consultation ends on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, residents will have no further opportunities to object to the proposals.*

Gary Sumner thanked everyone for attending, and confirmed that the presentation will be put on the website and Parish Council will arrange for a newsletter to be distributed to all residents.

### **Meeting was adjourned for Public Questions**

*A resident from Ham Road attended the meeting to raise a concern about the amount of water that is accumulating at the end of his driveway following the raising of the level of Ham Road due to the resurfacing work that has taken place. He stated that there was no problem with water accumulating before the road resurfacing took place, so who will be responsible for sorting the problem out for him. Gary Sumner confirmed that Parish Council will report the problem to SBC; hopefully this will sort the problem out.*

*A resident from Pond Farm attended the meeting to ask if he could meet with Parish Council to discuss his proposal for the footpath that runs along the edge of his land. It was agreed that Bob Biggs, along with members of the footpaths committee would arrange to meet with resident.*

#### 5. Report from Ward Councillor

Andrew Bennett was unable to attend the meeting.

### **6 PLANNING**

#### 6.1 To consider Planning Applications received:

**S/15/0128** – Honeyfield Farm – Erection of 1no dwelling for rural workers (to replace existing temporary rural workers dwelling).

*(Donna Stalker left while this application was discussed). Parish Council discussed the application and confirmed that as part of the applicant's submission they would have had to prove to SBC that their business meets all the financial guidelines for rural workers dwellings. After a discussion Parish Council agreed to raise no objection.*

#### 6.2 To notify the Schedule to the Permission/Consent received:

**S/14/2076** – Ermin Court House, High Street – Erection of a summerhouse

- 6.3 To notify the Schedule to the refusal received.  
None

## 7 COMMITTEE AND REPRESENTATIVES

### 7.1 Hooper's Field and Recreation

- 7.1.1 Lee Wells has carried out an inspection of all the goal posts in the village and made the following recommendations:-  
Church Meadow – Goal posts are in good order, but nets need replacing.  
Lower Rec – Smaller goal posts need resetting in the ground as wedges are currently helping the posts stay upright, and nets in good order.  
Lower Rec – Larger goal posts are old but safe, and nets in good order.  
Hooper's Field – Larger goal posts have rusted heavily and need replacement as he feels they are not safe  
Hooper's Field – Smaller goal posts are in good order, however wedges are needed at the base of the posts to prevent posts from moving.  
Parish Council agreed to gain quotes for the replacement of the goal posts at Hooper's Field
- 7.1.3 The basketball backboard and ring need replacing at Lower Rec; Parish Council agreed to gain a quote to replace.
- 7.1.4 Next Hooper's Field meeting is on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

### 7.2 Footpaths, Village Maintenance and Allotments

- 7.2.1 Clerk has reported a problem with fly-tipping along Kings Lane. The resident of 1 Mayfield has been tipping their garden waste over the fence and down Kings Lane. SBC have issued them with a letter of warning and have asked Parish Council to monitor. Bob Biggs confirmed that this has been a problem previously.
- 7.2.2 E-mail received from resident about a number of stiles, bridges and missing signs on the footpaths along Horpit. She would like to do another leaflet for the footpaths along Horpit but cannot do this until the footpaths have been improved. Clerk has been to look at the footpaths in question and the main problem is that the bridges are completely covered in shrubbery and brambles. An option would be to get Lee Wells to clear all this and to get SBC to replace the signs; Parish Council unanimously agreed.
- 7.2.3 The plastic coating on the two green seats at the Lower Rec has peeled off and they are starting to rust badly; Lee Wells is unable to repair them. Parish Council agreed to gain a quote to replace the seats.
- 7.2.4 Lee Wells has inspected the water tank at the allotment site; recommendations were forwarded to Allotment Committee. Bob Biggs confirmed they will discuss at their next committee meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> March once they have gained a cost for the new water tank.
- 7.2.5 Village Clean Up – Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March meeting at 9.30am at Hooper's Field. Councillors agreed to meet at Hooper's Field at 9.30am.

### 7.3 Wanborough Village Hall Management Committee

- 7.3.1 Colin Hayes confirmed that there was nothing to report, as there have been no committee meeting since the last Parish Council meeting.

### 7.4 Planning and Finance

- 7.4.1 Draft Terms of Reference have been circulated to all Councillors for review. Parish Councillors raised no issues, therefore it was agreed that the Terms of Reference would be adopted at the next meeting.
- 7.4.2 The Inspectors report for SBC's Local Plan 2026 and SBC Community Infrastructure Levy has now been received. Gary Sumner confirmed that nothing had been added or changed in relation to transport. The Inspector has confirmed Redlands, but interestingly in a paragraph of his report states that only a development of 30-40

houses at Redlands, which is in line with what Cllr Heenan stated. There is also no specific route for the Southern Connector Road.

- 7.4.3 *(Joe Smith left the meeting while this item was discussed)* Low Carbon Local Development Orders for public consultation. Two sites have been put forward within the Parish: Inlands Farm (further details provided in presentation at the start of the meeting) and land at the Horpit crossroads, plus along the edge of the A419 noise barriers/solar panels are proposed. Parish Council discussed and agreed that they would produce a newsletter for distribution to all residents. The newsletter will contain details of all the pros and cons of the solar panel sites, providing details as to how people can submit their comments to SBC before the consultation ends on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015. The newsletter would be circulated to all Councillors for agreement before it is produced. *ACTION Clerk*
- 7.4.4 E-mail from a resident asking if Parish Council will consider organising training for the defibrillators. He stated that similar training has taken place in other parishes, which have been well attended. After a discussion it was agreed to contact Community Heartbeat who attended a Parish Council meeting previously to see if they would attend our Annual Assembly on 11<sup>th</sup> May to provide residents with similar information as they did before. *ACTION Clerk*
- 7.4.5 E-mails received in relation to Stanley Close Development; problems with delivery lorries and a fence being erected in the wrong place.

## 8. FINANCE

### 8.1 Financial Statement

The monthly statement was circulated. It was proposed by Colin Offer and seconded by Colin Hayes that "The Financial Statement be accepted, the payment of accounts be endorsed and the bills for payment be accepted and paid, the petty cash expenditure for February 2015 endorsed and the transfers to cover February 2015 expenditure be approved."

### 8.2 Monthly Cash Flow Statement

The monthly cash flow statement was circulated. It was proposed by Colin Offer and seconded by Colin Hayes that the statement be accepted.

## 9. OTHER

### 9.1 Transport

- 9.1.1 Gary Sumner has sent an e-mail to Cllr Heenan in relation to the Merlin Way weight restriction; to date no reply has been received. Parish Council agreed that Gary Sumner would contact MP Robert Buckland about this matter.
- 9.1.2 The metro count results have now been received from SBC. The results show that Wanborough Parish Council are eligible for Community Speedwatch. Clerk confirmed that five residents will now attend the training, after which this scheme should be able to start in the village.
- 9.1.3 E-mail received from SBC Highways confirming that Kite Hill road between Magdalen Road and The Beanlands is on their list for resurfacing, however until the flood mitigation work is carried out they do not know when this work will be done. Gary Sumner confirmed that the flood mitigation work is due to start in April this year.
- 9.1.4 A resident has raised a complaint about signs for The Burj at Foxhill crossroads causing visibility problems. Clerk reported this problem to SBC back in November 2014 and, since receiving this complaint, sent another reminder, however no reply to date. Parish Council agreed to forward the details to Andrew Bennett.

### 9.2 Swindon Locality meeting

Bob Biggs provided an update from the Swindon Locality meeting. He confirmed that the Police are moving to Wroughton from Highworth, but there is no change in the

contact for Wanborough. He confirmed that there were many questions raised about how the hospital will cope with the expansion of Swindon and the fact that residents are travelling to other hospitals. The minutes of this meeting are available on SBC website.

9.3 Grants

No requests received

9.4 Flooding

9.4.1 The next Flood Management Meeting has been re-arranged to Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

9.5 Neighbourhood Plan

9.5.1 Landowners and businesses meeting was held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February; the meeting was very well attended. The deadline for application from landowners and businesses is at the end of February. The next committee meeting is due to be held on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February; at this meeting the committee will discuss the content of the Neighbourhood Plan.

9.6 Purchase of Wanborough Village Hall

Gary Sumner confirmed that the PCC have confirmed that they unanimously agreed that they did not want to sell the Village Hall. As a Parish Council there is nothing further we can do. The PCC have made their decision despite the advice from Bristol Diocese that we are not going to be in a position to extend the lease of the Village Hall when the lease ends in 2032. A copy of the PCC's decision along with the information provided from the Bristol Diocese were circulated to all Councillors.

Gary Sumner confirmed that he has informed the owners of the Post Office of the PCC's decision and, as Hooper's Field is not an option, there is nothing further Parish Council can do in trying to relocate the Post Office, so it is now up to the owners. An article has been put in the Lyden to explain to residents.

**10. CORRESPONDENCE**

*All other correspondence since the last meeting on 26th January 2015 was available at the meeting.*

*Meeting closed at 22.05*

*Date of next meeting Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015*