

## LITTLE BARDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF AN EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING ON FRIDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2015 AT MOOR HALL AT 8.00 P.M.

#### PRESENT

Cllr. William Gardiner (Chairman), Cllr. Terry Cutmore (Vice Chairman), Cllr. Colin Simpson, Cllr. Clare Beeston, and Mr. David McMyn.

Apologies had been received from Cllr. John Izod and D. Cllr. Simon Howell.

Mary Gardiner had offered to take the Minutes due to the late notification of this extra Ordinary meeting.

#### MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending to specifically discuss the Appeal lodged by Lightsource Renewable Energy Limited (The Appellant) following the refusal by Uttlesford District Council (UDC) of their solar farm application in June, 2015. The Chairman further thanked the Vice Chairman and Mr. David McMyn for all their hard work in submitting detailed documentation to (UDC), compilation and distribution of a letter to all Little Bardfield residents and the Parish Council's Petition in April, objecting to the installation and operation of a solar farm at Hawkspur Green.

The Chairman reported he had contacted D. Cllr. Simon Howell who advised we should focus our continued objections on planning policies. Read the Appellant's submitted documentation to ascertain if they have addressed any of the planning policies in the refusal. The Chairman further reported the National Farmers Union (NFU) had been contacted for advice who had confirmed the advice Simon had given us but also to specifically ask the Inspector to come and visit the site and research the Appeals the Appellant have identified in their documentation that were overturned at Appeal and the reasons why. **Action Point**

David reported he had identified an excellent document on UDC's website relating to the solar farm application, entitled Delegated Officer Report Recommendation, which summarised the application. It specifically identified two planning policies for refusal, being S7 The Countryside, which protects development beyond the Green Belt, and Policy GEN 3 Flood Protection. It was noted a document provided by the Appellant entitled Statement of Case on behalf of the Appellant should be read in conjunction with the Delegated Officer's Report. Colin agreed to review both these from a legal aspect and ascertain if anything needs to be acted upon. **Action: Colin**

Following a general discussion it was agreed we would prepare our case specifically on policies S7 and GEN 3. David agreed to prepare a draft document covering S7. **Action: David** It was agreed that either a bund or tree planting will spoil the view .

It was further agreed the Vice Chairman will prepare a draft document covering GEN 3, flooding. **Action Terry** David reported surface water testing was carried out in August. The Vice Chairman further reported he was concerned about excess water will run down the

bridleway as land is not being farmed. Also there seems to be some confusion as to whether there are going to be 3 ponds, but documentation would appear to be showing only 1.

It was agreed we need to ascertain the current political view on solar farm applications on rural agricultural land. **Action: William**

It was agreed we need to ask the Inspector to visit, so he can appreciate the unspoilt beauty of the proposed site. **Action: William**

We also need to check to see if the Appellant has moved the panels further back down the field. **Action Point** Concern was also raised as to how the remainder of the field was going to be farmed, has this been included in the Statement of Case? **Action Point**

Clare reported we should review the Appeals noted in the Appellant's Statement of Case to ascertain the reason for them being overturned. **Action: Terry**

The Chairman confirmed no maintenance was being undertaken by Andrew Davies at The Hydes solar farm.

It was agreed a letter needs to be sent to all Little Bardfield residents advising of the Appeal, confirming the Parish Council is continuing to object, details of where and how they can write in to the Planning Inspectorate, if they have not already done so, by 1<sup>st</sup> December. Also advising all documentation already submitted to UDC has been passed to the Planning Inspectorate. **Action: Clare**

Clare suggested whether her opposite neighbour, Lisa Vohmann might be able to assist as she is a Planning Specialist. **Action Point**

David reported he had heard a brief radio discussion regarding green energy and that the British Photovoltaic Association were moving away from large solar farms and wanting installations to go on roof tops, generating energy into batteries for consumers to use in the evening.

There was a general discussion on noise, of which there is none at present. The gentleman from Salmons who is an Electrical Engineer and also Clare's husband, Alan could assist with noise. **Action Point**

The Chairman to speak to Simon Howell to ascertain if UDC are going to be fighting the appeal and also whether the Parish Council will have the opportunity of commenting on the Road Traffic Plan. **Action: William** It was noted that in the majority of letters from residents were objecting to the increase in even more large lorries, cranes etc., using narrow country lanes.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

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Signed

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Dated