

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF HAZELBURY BRYAN PARISH COUNCIL HELD BY THE MEANS OF A REMOTE CONFERENCING FACILITY USING ZOOM ON TUESDAY 4th MAY 2021 AT 7.15 PM UNDER THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF AUTHORITY AND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020.

Present: Councillors Steve Murcer (SM), Martin Richards (MR), Val Rubie (VR), Ken Huggins (KH), Phil Dimmock (PD), Sarah Meeks (SaM) and Liz Stockley (LS); Members of the public – 11

Minutes: Malcolm Wilson (MW) – parish clerk.

087/21 – To elect a Chairman for the coming year: Steve Murcer was elected as Chairman for the next year.

088/21 - Apologies: Received from Dorset Council councillor Pauline Batstone (PB)

089/21 - Declarations of interest: LS re planning application 2/2021/01372

090/21 – Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 13th April 2021: The minutes were approved as drafted.

091/21 – Matters arising from these minutes: MR has not heard from Roger Bond about the post fir the Antelope fingerpost – MW will chase him up; MW will acknowledge the interesting papers on hedgehogs given to SM by Hazel Hedley

092/22 – Public open session: Ian Stevenson asked if the fingerpost at the school could also do with a new post – MW will take a look and contact Roger Bond if necessary; Bruce Marriott reported he had noticed a lot more Police activity lately.

093/21 – To elect a Vice-Chairman for the coming year: Val Rubie was elected as Vice-chairman for the next year

094/21 – To resolve to take the General Power of Competence for the coming year: It was agreed to take the General Power of Competence for the next year.

095/21 – To appoint members of the Recreation Ground Committee for the coming year: Alun Read, Jim Bettel, Heln Fry, Rebekah-Joy Spinks and Bernie Flynn were re-appointed for the next year. The Chairman and Vice-chairman of the parish council remains as ex-officio members.

096/21 – To appoint a representative to the Village Hall Committee: Liz Stockley was appointed for the next year.

097/21 – To assign responsibilities for the next year on the following matters: These were agreed for the next year as follows i) **rights of way** – Martin Richards and Sarah Meeks ; ii) **allotments** – Ken Huggins ; iii) **transport** – Martin Richards

098/21 – Finance: i) to approve the following payments: The following payments were approved:

Cheque	Payee		Net	VAT	Total
SO	IK Services	Dog bin emptying	126.50		126.50
DD	Dorset Council	Cemetery business rates	25.00		25.00
1327	M Wilson	Expenses	83.36	2.91	86.27
1328	M Wilson	May pay	353.74		353.74
1329	Darkin Miller	Internal audit	306.69	61.34	368.03
1330	JB Gardens	Cemetery hedge, gate, fence	1648.00	329.60	1977.60
1331	Water2Business	Pavilion water	36.95		36.95
			Total		2974.09

ii) to note the report of the internal auditor on the annual accounts and governance and agree action

following the recommendations in the report: The report, together with formal responses on remedial action,

had been circulated and was approved iii) **year-end accounts – to approve the accounts for the year ending**

31st March 2021 and authorise the Chairman to sign a) the Governance Statement, b) the Certificate of

Exemption and c) the Annual Return: These had all been circulated in advance and the Chairman was authorised to approve and sign all the necessary documents.

099/21 – Planning: a) to consider any applications received: a) to consider any planning applications

including: i) P/FUL/2021/01018 – North Dairy Farm, Pulham, DT2 7EA – Proposed installation of ground-mounted solar panel photovoltaic solar arrays, substation, inverter stations, transformer stations, security

fencing, gates and CCTV; form vehicular access, internal access track, landscaping and other ancillary

infrastructure: SM explained a pre-meeting of some councillors had taken place a few days ago just to ensure they were up to speed with the details of the application. No views had been expressed about how councillors individually might vote.

Ian Bryan, representing the Save Hardy's Vale campaign, had summarised and circulated its arguments against the proposed developments. This paper is included as Appendix 1 to these minutes. He talked through the objections for the benefit of all those attending. Bruce Marriott clarified that the right of way through the site would remain, it is not being extinguished. It's amenity value – change of scene, loss of view etc – will be impacted.

Councillors had a wide-ranging discussion on the merits, or otherwise, of the proposed development, and especially as to how it relates to the Neighbourhood Plan. The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan relate to Hazelbury Bryan itself apart from Policy HB4 – Key Rural Views; it is unclear how much planning weight this can be given when assessing proposed developments outside the parish boundary.

Points made in favour include:

- it would support the carbon reduction measures driving the parish council's adoption of a climate and ecological emergency
- the switch to electric vehicles, including commercial vehicles and agricultural vehicles will require a huge (fourfold?) increase in electricity generating capacity.
- this scene has the advantage of local electricity generation with easy access to the grid
- The only protected view in the Neighbourhood Plan that the development will affect is the view from the cemetery, but it seems that much of the solar development will be hidden by existing housing development (Woodlands) and it would be hard to describe the impact on the view as "devastating"
- wind turbines locally will not be without a cost to views and noise. Given 40 % of Dorset is classified as AONB it will be hard to fit in renewable energy schemes that don't have any impact on an AONB
- the impact of un-checked climate change will have a far more devastating impact on our entire landscape than a solar farm, even one of this scale.
- this scheme will generate renewable green energy almost instantly, and the Government doesn't expect the UK to have enough wind power until 2030 at the earliest. In addressing the climate emergency, 8 years is a long time.
- the loss of the land for beef or dairy farming will not be a "loss" given the need to switch away from meat and dairy based diets

Points made against include:

- the size and scale of the site is massive and will have a huge, detrimental impact on the landscape of the Blackmore Vale
- other, smaller sites have been built so the argument of "it must be this big to be economically viable" is not accepted
- views from so many places will be adversely affected
- the impact on bio-diversity might well be negative. The loss of insect and other species is not so great in rural areas compared with urban areas
- the panels might create a micro-climate with a heat-haze effect
- migrating birds might be confused by the vast array of panels
- the proposal will not bring any local economic benefits
- better use of the land might be made with geo-thermal developments

Conclusion: After a lengthy discussion taking account of the differing views of individual councillors, both for and against, it was agreed to support the proposed development provided that the scale and size could be reduced, perhaps by as much as 50%. The parish council would also expect full compliance with the bio-diversity measures, including planting and maintenance of hedgerows etc, for the life of the scheme and for Dorset Council to have the power and will to take effective enforcement action if necessary.

ii) P/HOU/2021/01372 – 2 Church View, Wonston, DT10 2DF – erect single storey rear extension: No objections

100/21 – Cemetery – consideration of progress on potential extension of the cemetery: PD has spoken with the co-owner and there is no desire to sell any of the adjacent land. Given the cemetery has capacity for 10 years or so, it was agreed to defer any possible extension for 4 or 5 years, by which time there might be changed circumstances.

101/21 – Covid 19 – to review the current situation and any action required locally: SM has spoken with Carol Jones of The Pantry in Sturminster Newton, and she is considering how the parish council might best provide support.

102/21 - Climate and ecological emergency – general update, including newsletter: The next meeting of the working group is on 11th May. VR has done a very well received draft CEE newsletter. SM will draft a summary Bytes to go inside (possibly with a finance year end summary by MW) within the next week to enable delivery of both later this month.

103/21 – Bryan Bytes – next edition: see minute 102/21 above.

104/21 – Neighbourhood Plan: Nothing to report.

105/21 - Footpath and highways matters: i) **Speeding at Park Gate:** Councillors had differing views on the impact of the new white lines on their driving behaviour. Highways are looking at the previous speed survey, but the likelihood is that 85% of the traffic is going at no more than 30 mph, so there is no real imperative for Highways to take action to formally reduce the speed limit. ii) **Ian Stevenson work with the Rangers:** His report on stiles had been circulated. He expects to have more detailed information from the Rangers for the next meeting. iii) **fingerposts:** See minute 091/21 above

106/21 – The Keep – update: i) **the meadow:** Nothing to report ii) **allotment parking:** A quote from JB Gardens is still awaited.

107/21 -Recreation Field i) to note any relevant Committee minutes: No formal meeting held ii) **update on other relevant matters:** MW had circulated notes of an informal meeting of the Committee to discuss practicalities for the coming summer, post Covid. One urgent matter that has arisen since that meeting is anti-social behaviour by some youths, with broken glass, used condoms and other items left in the children's play area. Maggie Chapman has decided she can no longer deal with the bins. The Committee are looking at alternatives but it was noted that it might be necessary for the parish council to pay a commercial contractor to do the job (possibly the dog waste bin contractor). KH kindly volunteered to work jointly with Mrs Chapman if that might help her.

108/21 – Village hall – report: The hall remains out of bounds for most user groups until the “rule of 6” ends, hopefully on June 21st. This included parish council meetings

109/21 – Report from Dorset Council Cllr Batstone: There was no report.

110/21 - Public open session and AOB: SaM continues to liaise with the Rangers over the bridleway improvements at Woodrow. Estimates for the work vary from £18k to £32k, depending largely on Natural England's views on the use of heavy machinery in this sensitive spot. Any parish council contribution will need to be considered at budget time. KH urged councillors to write to our MP, Simon Hoare, to pursue the plans for zero carbon building regulations.

111/21 – Correspondence to note: None

112/21 – Date of next meeting: With the regulations allowing remote zoom meetings expiring on 7th May, setting a date for a next meeting is tricky given ongoing Covid restrictions, The possibility of having councillors meeting in person, but with the public attending remotely, is being considered by the High Court but no decision is expected for a couple of months. It was agreed that the next parish council meeting will be on Tuesday 13th July 2021, by which time the hall should be open for business as usual. If anything urgent needs a decision before that time, then some ad-hoc arrangement might be necessary.

113/21 – Close of meeting: With no further business to discuss SM closed the meeting at 9.00 pm.

Appendix 1 to minutes of 4th May 2021

SHV PRESENTATION/DEBATE NOTES FOR HAZELBURY BRYAN AGM

North Dairy Farm Solar Limited

Application [P/FUL/2021/01018](#)

4/5/2021 via Zoom

A lot has happened since Councillors visited the proposed 190-acre site back in 2020.

Energy generation is now low carbon. That's helped the UK to almost eliminate the use of coal i.e., down to around 2%. In 2020

And the carbon cost of energy has been reduced significantly. Down from 535 gCO₂/kWh in 2008 to 245 gCO₂/kWh last year. And at 14:00 yesterday, carbon intensity was down to 138 grams CO₂/ kWh equivalent.

Over last weekend, wind generated 48.5% of the electricity grid in the UK, which was more than the contribution made by gas plants, nuclear and biomass combined. However, electricity from solar plants, only made up 2.3% of the electricity mix.

Last October, the Government announced massive investment in wind generation, and targeted 2030 for all homes in England to have their low carbon energy supplied by offshore wind.

As mentioned, the carbon cost of offshore wind energy is significantly lower than for solar and, of course, solar is only available during daylight.

Wind energy produced at night can be stored, or used to re-generate energy, or to produce fuel, for example Hydrogen by electrolysis.

Some things have not changed since your site visit. I believe it is common ground between us that the catastrophe of global warming, and resultant harmful changes to our climate, is causing an ecological disaster which affects us all.

That dramatically underlines the importance of choosing to generate the energy we need in the most efficient way, and at the lowest possible carbon cost.

The Green Party also puts offshore wind at the top of its list of low carbon energy production.

Dorset Council have already said that, quote "The development is likely to result in a marked change to a significant area of the Blackmore Vale landscape when viewed from high viewpoints in the AONB."

The Council also warned the applicant that the proposed site is within an area that is very highly sensitive to solar development.

But there is still more common ground between us and the developers. They have identified the significant harms development would cause to the landscape and the Conservation Areas of Hazelbury Bryan and Mappowder. They offer mitigation planting as compensation for those harms. Very significant among the harm caused would be the loss of amenity to users of the Public Footpath crossing the site – there can be no compensation for destroying that amenity.

The development would remove the peaceful enjoyment of the special and protected landscape enjoyed by residents and visitors.

It would turn the rural landscape into a 190-acre industrial site and take productive agricultural land out of full production.

Despite the developers claims, this site is excellent farming country. Mappowder and Hazelbury are homes to some of the most successful organic dairy farmers in the country. They farm much of the land immediately adjacent to the site.

All of the biodiversity measures proposed could be implemented (with Government support) without shading the land with glass.

The Planning Inspector in the Fifehead Magdalen Appeal 2020 Decision noted: "The proposed development (21.4 hectares) cannot be successfully assimilated into the receiving valued landscape. It will be visually intrusive because of its industrial character and scale* and will be harmful to the setting of heritage assets and to the character of the wider landscape." *The North Dairy site is nearly 360% bigger!

There is also common agreement that the development would be in full view from, and within the setting of the highly protected Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The applicants have demonstrated that 4 of the fields of panels will be clearly seen from Hazelbury Bryan (their image 8)

The proposed site is surrounded by land which is prone to flooding. We will present evidence to Dorset Council that runoff into flood zones 2 and 3 from the panels, and the, often saturated site, will increase "significantly" during intense rainfall events.

One of the Council's key responsibilities, when deciding how to comment on a contentious development proposal, is to listen to the community, and you are to be commended for doing that tonight.

But, in a sense the community has already voted! Section 3.2. of the Hazelbury Plan, it states that the "features particularly valued by the community include the: "narrow country roads and lanes and with open fields between them; the many rights of way and opportunities to enjoy the surrounding countryside, the general peace and quiet" and "the surrounding hills and views out across the rolling countryside of Thomas Hardy's Wessex."

The Plan's stated aim is "to protect", as far as possible, "the current environment in all its aspects." When the applicant conducted their community consultation, nearly 80% of the respondents said they are opposed to the development proposals.

To summarise

This high carbon -cost solar power station proposal comes at the wrong time, when Government policy is to go for carbon cheaper, more efficient offshore wind.

It would certainly be in the wrong place, and would unnecessarily "industrialise" a valued and sensitive landscape. It would harm the settings of the Dorset AONB, the setting of the Conservation Areas. It is inconsistent with the Hazelbury Bryan Neighbourhood Plan, and would increase flooding downstream.

YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED TO AVOID UNNECESSARY INDUSTRIAL DESTRUCTION IN THE BLACKMORE VALE!

Ian Bryan, SHV