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| **Bracon Ash and Hethel Parish Council****Minutes of the September 2020 Parish Council** **At Bracon Ash & Hethel village hall** **On Monday 14th September 2020 at 7.30PM** |
| **Present:** Mr Colin Rudd – Chairman Cllr Nigel Legg Mr Neil DyerMrs Mary Gray Mr Roy HayesDistrict Cllr Gerry FrancisClerk Mrs Carole Jowett 12 members of the public attended  |
| **1** | **To consider apologies** **for absence**Mr Biddle, Mr Horton, Mrs Howlett and Cllr Clifford-Jackson had sent their apologies. |
| **2** | **To receive declaration of interests in items on agenda**None |
| **3** | **Resolution to adjourn the meeting for public participation, District and County Councillor reports** **Public participation****Solar farm proposal**Concerns were expressed about the proposed solar farm adjacent to Cranes Road and School Road as follows:* the effect on the right of way, the accuracy of the planning application and impact on houses nearby
* Concerns about the capacity of the power lines
* Impact on the view as it was believed that the land could not be built on

Clarification was given that the application was to find out whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was required but the decision had recently been made by South Norfolk Council that an EIA was not required* Concerns were raised about how many solar panels could be required for the local area
* Directional glare was a concern for people and the screening on other developments had not been adequately screened
* It was felt that this proposal was driven by financial gain rather than the desire to provide renewable energy
* The provision of CCTV was raised as a concern and that solar panels and the ancillary equipment would attract crime essentially changing the village
* There were many birds of prey and herons in the area
* There were reported to be greater crested newts on the site

The chairman said that he understood the issues raised but any objections to a planning application would need to be based on planning rules. The chairman said that the landowner had indicated that they would be willing to meet local people and discuss the proposals. There were issues with the current restrictions on meetings which could be an issue, it was agreed after discussion that the chairman would contact the agent although any gathering would need to be outside and he suggested it could be better to do this once the planning application had been submitted.The chairman suggested that an action group be formed by local residents who could get together to research and consider what actions or objections could be used. There were concerns expressed that developers had a lot of knowledge as they had done these applications multiple times.Concerns were raised about increased traffic movements during development.There would need to be a junction box and these make a loud humming noise, it would be important to know where this would be located and it should not be close to anyone’s home. Concerns were raised that the site could potentially be used for housing if this application was refused. The area was outside of the development boundary, but this could be changed in future.The telephone numbers that had been collected for track and trace at the start of the meeting could be used to contact people when necessary and it was agreed by everyone at the meeting that they agreed to the reuse of their personal data. **Other issues** The footpaths on the common were in a good condition, edging was being discussed. There were some logs left from the tree work that could be used if anyone wanted them.**District councillor report** Cllr Legg reported that the council offices remained closed to members and the public. Risk assessments had been done but officers seemed reluctant to return to the office as they were working from home.He said that the development management committee was difficult with fewer members and being held by video. He added that a lot of meetings had been held with Broadland Council and it seemed it was becoming more and more joined up although refuse collections would stay separate. The Government’s white paper on planning had been published. Village clusters through the GNLP is moving along, the number of sites had been reduced to 70 although the white paper could have an impact on this. There had been meetings with Norfolk County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group about pharmacy services. Issues had been encountered during when the pandemic was at its worse, additional housing was also putting a strain on pharmacies. No information was being received from the local hospital, and whilst cancer care etc had been recommenced there was no information on other clinics that had been put on hold. He said that the public had not been kept informed. Cllr Clifford-Jackson had sent a written report (see appendix A) |
| **4** | **To confirm minutes and review matters arising from the meeting on 18th May 2020**The minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2020were agreed and signed.  |
| **5** | **To consider and agree measures to secure the playing field to restrict access to the neighbour’s field**The neighbour to the playing field had stated that they were going put up a fence up to stop children accessing their land. There was an ongoing dispute on the ownership of the ditch but there were no objections to a fence being erected outside of the playing field boundary. Repeated complaints had been received about noise from children playing, children accessing their land and that their garden was overlooked from the new higher platform. Legal action had been threatened but after consideration it was believed that were no issues to answer. |
| **6** | **To discuss and agree a parish council response to a proposed solar farm adjacent to School Road (planning application 2020/1409)** A response had been submitted to the planning application for the scoping opinion raising concerns about the amount of proposed work. No further action could take place until the planning application was submitted. Mr Dyer responded to each of the points that had been raised by members of the public and he expressed his disappointment that the public attendees had left before the issue was discussed.  |
| **7** | **To discuss and agree a response to the proposed energy innovation park consultation** The application was for land owned by Goffs and there were concerns about additional access to the B1135. It was agreed to raise concerns because the proposed development is outside of the development boundary and about traffic concerns. |
| **8** | **To consider a policy and risk assessment on the common including the provision of signs**An annual risk assessment could be required to ensure that there are no dangerous trees. An opinion would be sought from a tree expert as to what should be done.  |
| **9** | **To consider options for playing field car parking**Options were discussed but it was agreed that at present there were no real issues, it was agreed to leave this and consider what other issues needed to be considered in the village before any expenditure was committed.There was some maintenance work to be done on the play area equipment but there were no real problems. A quote would be obtained to get the small items addressed. The goal posts required cleaning and repainting.  |
| **10** | **Finance****10.1**  **To receive statement of accounts to 14th September 2020** The accounts were reviewed and agreed. **10.2** **To review and agree the annual CIL report**The report was reviewed and agreed. **10.3 To agree invoices for payment in accordance with budget**Chq no 948 C Jowett £295.35 Clerks salaryChq no 949 HMRC £196.40 PAYEDD BT Plc £46.49 Community hubChq no 950 Wymondham £350.00 Tree work on common Tree ServicesThe payments were agreed, and the cheques were signed.  |
| **11** | **To consider correspondence received** A book had been created with photographs of all residents in the millennium year and a copy had been given to the community events group.  |
| **12** | **To consider agenda items for the next meeting on 19th October 2020 and close****Agenda items**To consider a policy and risk assessment on the common including the provision of signs.**Future meeting dates** 19th October 2020 – venue at the village hall subject to covid-19 rules. 30th November 2020  |
| **13** | **Close** The chairman closed the meeting at 21:30 |
|  | Signed …………………………………………. Date …………………… Colin RuddChairman to Bracon Ash and Hethel Parish Council |

**Appendix a**

**Councillor Vivienne Clifford-Jackson - Report for Bracon Ash & Hethel PC September 2020**

Despite being the traditional holiday season the Council has been very eventful for the last month. This was largely clearing up outstanding issues, which were caused, or delayed by the pandemic crisis. Aside from the on-line parish council meetings we had Full Council, Scrutiny, Cabinet, Finance (incorporating Risk), People and Communities, Commercial Trading, planning (DMC) twice, the Regulatory, and Economy & Environment Committees. All the meetings (unless exempt for commercial sensitivity) are streamed on YouTube and this is getting much more attention than when we held them in public at the council offices. Scrutiny examined in some detail the process and effects of the ‘Confidence Campaign’ in our Market Towns. We made recommendations from the lessons learned in case it should be needed in the future. The Risk Register, Audit accounts and future budget had very thorough debate, balancing the possible future needs for expenditure and the loss of income which is unpredictable. The Recovery Plan which included the Leisure Centres and the Help Hub, the Environmental Strategy and the housing & homelessness strategy were signed off. The outcome of the Waste strategy going forward is awaited shortly. Temporary Pavement Licensing and loans to Parish Councils were adopted as a result of Government changes under the Covid-19 Emergency legislation. We discussed the council reaction to Covid at Scrutiny Committee on the 9th September in great detail and aside from much praise for the council actions and exemplary staff, there was also discussion about lessons learned ready for another such occasion.

There have been public announcements about changes to planning law (I attended a webinar about the White Paper, see link attached), I attended a further update on planning last week. Local government structures may change under a devolution process which has already started in the North of England. We have been warned (according to the leader) that money coming from BREXIT gains will benefit those councils who sign up to a devolution process. Some Test Track and Trace is being devolved to local public health systems, which seem to be more successful at tracing.

Locally we continue to pursue the issues of planning conditions not being met to our residents’ satisfaction. However it has been emphasised that we should balance economic, social and environmental factors when assessing planning decisions. I attended a webinar on the Thickthorn process which has changed the routes slightly but I remain concerned about the environmental impact. The Windfarm sub-station issues continue with added interest from Swardeston, Swainsthorpe and Mulbarton Parish Councils. There is also on-going consultation on the Western Link until 20th September via the County Council Website.

I would like to know the experience of our residents with regard to IT connectivity. I am assured that everyone should now have access at a reasonable speed if they have VDSL (not ADSL) router/modem ‘fibre to box’ installed by their provider. Apparently many providers are saying they have installed this, but haven’t. Despite all assurances I am finding there are still ‘black spots’ where reception remains poor on all devices and I would like to follow this up.

You will have had the consultation docs on Member Codes of Conduct, Licensing and the White Paper (attached). There is also consultation by Government of the proposal to ban pavement parking by 22nd November 2020.