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| **Bracon Ash and Hethel Parish Council**  **Minutes of the February Parish Council meeting**  **At Bracon Ash & Hethel Village Hall**  **On Monday 27th February 2023 at 7.30PM** | |
| **Present:**  Mr Colin Rudd – Chairman Mr Roy Hayes Mr Neil Dyer  Cllr Nigel Legg Mrs Anne Howlett Mr Steve Horton  Mrs Mary Gray Mrs Zoe Barr  District Councillors Gerry Francis and Ian Spratt  Clerk Mrs Carole Jowett  6 members of the public attended | |
|  | **To consider apologies** **for absence**  Mr Biddle had sent his apologies for absence. |
|  | **To receive a presentation from Plandescil on proposed solar farm**  Representatives from Plandescil attended and gave an update on the proposed wind farm. If planning permission was obtained, early work would be done in advance of the solar panels being installed as there was likely to be a 5-year lead time on the installation due to congestion on the national grid. The landscaping and environmental management plan would be started to get the planting established.  The feed into the mains connection was likely to be between 2028 and 2031.  This would be a local area as opposed to a national project. The generated electricity would not be fed into the proposed East Anglia GREEN infrastructure but into existing infrastructure, it was the wind farms that required the new network. This proposal would be connected to the grid on site with no overhead impact. Battery storage on site would be to help to manage the feed at peak times. Concerns were raised about fire risk with battery storage but it was explained that each battery had isolators and if any there was any issue foam would be fed into the faulty unit. There was ongoing Investigation into alternatives to lithium batteries.  The application was to be submittedto secure planning permissionso enable ecologicalwork to commence.  The agricultural land was a mixture of grade 3 and 3b.  Maintenance of planting would be managed through a 30-year stewardship agreement.  Access would be along the agricultural track and not through the village. The maintenance tracks would be made of crushed stone,  There would be no lighting on the site but there would be low-level lighting on the maintenance area. There would be deer fencing on the perimeter and badger gates could be provided.  Concerns were raised that the public right of way would be enclosed with no escape route. It was clarified that the width of the pathway would be 10 metres to aid visibility.  A question was asked about any benefit to the local community and it was said that there was likely to be a contribution to the parish council. |
|  | **To receive declaration of interests in items on agenda**  There were no declarations of interest made. |
|  | **Resolution to adjourn the meeting for public participation, District and County Councillor reports**  **District councillor report**  Cllr Legg reported that council tax for South Norfolk Council had been frozen for the coming year.  The move to Horizon House was expected to be in May.  The nutrient neutrality issue had not been resolved but a solution using reed beds to absorb pollution could be used where developers would have to pay to get credits to build properties but this would be at a significant cost.  The county council was working with the government to have a locally elected chair but South Norfolk Council was opposed to this.  Equinor had applied for a development consent order and the district council was supporting it citing employment and economic benefits however this benefit was not clear.  The environment agency had not yet made clear when or how the pollution in Marsh Lane would be deemed dealt with.  The Levelling Up and Regeneration bill was going through parliament. Once passed housing targets would not be driven by the government and the protection of land would be based on Natural England’s definition.  NHS England was considering a 2nd major trauma centre to be based in Norwich as Cambridge was too far away to meet the timelines for treatment.  Cllr Spratt said that member award grants would continue from April. He also said that £200 grants for the coronation would be available to parish councils.  He reported that there had been a meeting in Essex between those against the use of pylons by East Anglia GREEN and the minister Stewart Clarke who said that offshore was being investigated. The final proposal would go to the Planning Inspectorate by 2024. Countryfile had done a piece on this development which was available to watch on iPlayer. It was suggested that the cost of pylons would be £1bn with the cost of offshore being £5bn although it was believed this was a false claim with alternative funding forecasts.  Voter identification was a contentious issue but would be in place for the May elections Cllr Spratt encouraged people to sign up for postal votes or ensure they had their proof of identity in place.  The future of the walk-in centre in Rouen Road would be discussed at health scrutiny meeting next week, there was opposition to a proposed closure.  **Public participation**  The hedging had been planted on Poorhouse Lane.  Pond 3 has been tidied up and roots removed.  Maintenance on common would take place on 2nd April 2023.  A chaser had been sent to obtain a quote for the village sign.  The glades had been cut . |
|  | **To confirm minutes and review matters arising from the meeting held on 9th January 2023**  The minutes of the January meeting were unanimously agreed and signed by the chairman. |
|  | **Finance**   * 1. **To receive statement of accounts to 27th February 2023**   The accounts were reviewed and agreed.  **6.2** **To agree invoices for payment in accordance with budget**  DD BT Plc £47.94 Community hub  BACS C Jowett £317.62 Clerks salary  BACS HMRC £211.60 PAYE  BACS C Jowett £8.97 Postage  It was agreed that payment of £3475.00 + VATshould be made from CIL for the SAM2 machine on receipt of the invoice.  Mrs Barr proposed that the payments be made, Mrs Howlett seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed. |
|  | **To consider the South Norfolk village clusters housing allocations plan – regulation 19 publication**  BRA1 had been left in the plan the village currently had 0.83 people per hectare the development of this site would increase the volume to over 1.00 per hectare. All previous objections would be resubmitted.  The consultation was about whether the process had been followed  It was stated that the plan should be reviewed every 5 years.  The evidence available showed it was out of date.  To submit all the original objections and request that due process should have been followed. |
|  | **To review actions required from the RoSPA report**  Mr Horton would obtain a quote for all the issues highlighted in amber and red. |
|  | **To discuss and agree action on the environmental issue in Marsh Lane**  The Environment Agency (EA) had visited the site and as a result the ditch had been cleared however the ditch had refilled with more contaminated water. The amount of contamination in the soil for over 10 years may need all the soil to be removed.  The soil at the far side of the road was also contaminated. the EA had said the ditch needed to be emptied regularly for the next 2 years and had also said that the contamination was harmful but not toxic.  It was considered that the EA performance was not up to scratch on enforcing environmental laws. It was suggested that the agency was not the correct path to take on this issue and the MP would be the best way forward.  The contamination was in a nitrate vulnerable zone where nitrate levels had to be below specific levels write to EA and copy to Richard Bacon re this issue.  It was said that an analysis of water taken from ditch should be done as there were greater crested newts in the location. |
|  | **To receive an update on the purchase of a SAM2 machine**  The machine had been collected by Mr Horton and he would set it up and deploy it. |
|  | **To consider planning applications**  **11.1** **2022/2072**  Proposal: Variation of condition 2 and removal of condition 9 of 2014/0427 - (2) Amend the external appearance of the dwelling and (9) removal of condition 9 due to no site remediation being required, as confirmed through the discharge of condition 8 under application 2017/0321  Location: Land East of Darnell House Church Lane Hethel  Object to the application as the only reason it was granted was due to the use of regulation 55 and if the design was changed the application should be refused.  **11.2 2023/0319**  Proposal: Variation of conditions 1 and 2 of 2021/0569 - to amend the period by which the solar farm is to be decommissioned until 40 years after the solar farm commences generating electricity Location: Land East of Cranes Road Hethel Norfolk  It was agreed that no comments would be submitted. |
|  | **To consider correspondence received**  No issues |
|  | **To agree agenda items for next meeting on 3rd April 2023**  **Agenda item**  To consider any action ahead of the elections  27 March 2023 - it was agreed to change the meeting date from 3 April 2023  15th May 2023 – AGM would commence at 7pm  26th June 2023  14th August 2023  23rd October 2023  13th November 2023 |
|  | **Close**  The chairman closed the meeting at 21:10 |
| Signed …………………………………………. Date ……………………  Colin Rudd  Chairman to Bracon Ash and Hethel Parish Council | |