

## HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Harberton Parish Council 7.30pm on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2015, Harbertonford CE Primary School.

**Present:** Cllrs Beamish, Broom, Camp, Clayton, J. Hockings, S. Hockings, Hoddinott, Janes, Padfield, Trott, Williams, Wynne and District Cllr Steer

**Apologies:** County Cllr Vint

**Public:** 22

**Clerk:** Ms C. Radford

### **Public Session**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited members of the public to speak.

- A resident described her fear of the prospect of the Foales Leigh Turbine being erected so close to her property. Previous applications on the site have been denied, yet appeals were made and a new application submitted on the same site. It was commented that renewable energy companies are ruthless in their pursuit of profit and subsidised through feed in tariffs.
- A Dittisham resident reported that gear noise from a turbine at Capton can be heard by residents in the village who live 650 metres away from the structure. The power generated will come in at half the power promised, suggesting that facts and figures given should not be accepted on face value.
- It was commented that the photo montages produced are actually panoramic views and have the incorrect proportions for the given length and give no visual sense of the impact of the turbine, seriously under representing the size of the turbine proposed. This gives Councillors and members of the public flawed information on which to base opinion.
- It was commented that the previous application was refused in November 2012 yet the area swept by the blades in this new application is reported to be an 83% bigger area. It was commented that it would be helpful to fly a blimp to enable the public to see the height proposed. The speaker commented that he is generally supportive of wind energy, but not when proposals are out of keeping with the local landscape. It has been commented that a smaller turbine is not suitable for this site, 'go and find another site that is suitable then'.
- It was commented that it is important to remember that this is not about 'them and us', 'people against farmers', nor about whether you support turbines, wind or solar development. It is about whether this is a suitable application for this site. Most people's major concerns are that the application is not complete, it doesn't fit government guidelines and the impact on ecology has not been met.
- It was commented that there are 18 species of bats in Britain. The inadequate Ecology Report even showed 10 species recorded in the area which would be affected by pressure waves from the turbine. There would be 3 species of bat with a high risk of death and 2 species at risk of death. Turbines and nocturnal bats can't co-exist.
- A member of the public commented that they would like to support renewable energy, but object very strongly to this proposal due to the inaccuracies of the planning application, misleading information provided, the sheer size of the turbine, as taller, wider, regardless of the objection to the smaller size of the previously refused application, the visual impact in the vicinity. The noise level is unknown but the Capton example suggests noise is more significant than suggested. There is no decent information to prove impact on the bat population, nor to the impact on tourism.
- 30% of the Greater Horseshoe Bat population resides in this area.
- A member of the public commented that they are heartily fed up with the number of applications in the parish. The individual accepted the need for these developments but the local area already has a fair number. There are fewer and fewer areas where these developments exist. A turbine like this has already been turned down; it would have a big impact on the landscape but the power generated would be very limited.

Members of the public were reminded that the Parish Council is only one consultee giving recommendation to the Planning Authority.

Cllr Hockings declared that he and Cllr Hoddinott viewed the site when the application first came in and commented that the proposed turbine would be too close to the cottages and would be better if it were moved further away. The developer did not change the position of the proposed turbine. Recently, there has been a comment that the Parish Council selected the site, which is not true and should be noted for the record that this is not the case. Having requested advice from the legal team at South Hams District Council (SHDC) on whether Cllr Hoddinott or J Hockings should abstain from voting on this issue, the advice given was that it would be acceptable to vote as it is a new turbine. Therefore the Councillors named will not abstain.

### **Agenda**

1. **Apologies** were received from C.Cllr Vint
2. **Reports from County and District Councillors**  
Messages from County Cllr Vint:

- The Toll House Cycle path will go ahead.
- Cllr Vint has received many complaints from Bridgetown regarding the Devon County Survey of Subsidised Bus Routes, but only 2 messages from Harberton and none from the other parishes (arguing that they don't have a bus anyway)
- A letter has been sent from Totnes Town Council to press the issue of extending the speed limit southwards beyond Gerston Cross on the A381.

District Cllr Steer thanked the Parish Council for kindness and support following death of his brother. He reported that the vote on Council Tax figures will be taken on Thursday and it will not likely to go up.

3. **Minutes** Minor amendments were made to the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015 before signed as an accurate record.

#### 4. **Report Matters Arising from the Minutes**

- Cllr Clayton forwarded her comments on the reduction of the bus service to the C. Cllr for inclusion in his response to Stage Coach.
- The Clerk has written to Darren Cole at Highways, but has not yet received a response.
- Progress is slow on opening new bank accounts for the Community Benefit fund, but being progressed by the Chairman and Clerk.
- A letter from Dr Sarah Wollaston MP was received thanking the Clerk for copying her in on the response to the Ministers Financial Statement regarding local council referendum on budget increases. The Clerk also received a notice from DALC informing that Parish Council's will not be subject to referendum, and that the 2015/16 budget will not be capped.
- The clerk's letter to PCSO Broadhurst had received a response, which was read out in full to the Parish Council. In summary, monthly Police Reports have been phased out, but the Parish Council would be informed in the event of a 'trend' appearing.

#### 5. **Planning**

##### 5.1. **Planning Applications:**

###### 5.1.1. Planning Application 23/0041/15/F

Application for erection of 1no wind turbine (estimated output 0.1 megawatts) with 36.9 metre hub height 49.9 meter tip height and associated infrastructure at Foales Leigh Farm, Harberton TQ9 7SS

Cllr S. Hocking declared an interest and did not participate in the discussion.

**It was RESOLVED** the Parish Council object to the application on the grounds of visual impact, landscape impact, noise and ecology.

###### 5.1.2. Planning Application 23/0183/15/F

Erection of 3No bedroom split level dwelling at Hillcroft, Moreleigh Road, TQ9 7TS

The Parish Council had received notification from the owner of Hillcroft that this planning application was for land north of Hillcroft, not at Hillcroft itself.

**It was RESOLVED** the Parish Council has no objection to the house in principle, but believe there should be disabled access and a better disposition of toilet facilities.

- 5.2. **To consider site meeting procedure. It was RESOLVED** that following site inspections, any debate or resolutions on planning applications should take place in public. It was agreed to take this matter up in an amendment to the Standing Orders when revised in May 2015.

- 5.3. No planning decisions had been made since the last meeting and there was nothing to report.

#### 6. **Monthly reports**

6.1. **Finance Committee Update** Nothing to report

6.2. **Neighbourhood Plan Update** It was reported that members of the housing working group had met SHDC officers Bridget Green and Cassandra Harrison, reporting that the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) and the Local Plan (Our Plan) should be progressed simultaneously. The HNP steering group had resolved to create a timetable to link with the Our Plan timetable so that completed HNP chapters can feed into the Our Plan process. The steering group resolved to hold two housing workshops, one in Harberton and one in Harbertonford. The steering group will apply for funding to support NP processes as it becomes available in April. Green Lanes have been included in a statement about preserving tranquillity. An Economy chapter will include sections on farming, the silver pound and tourism. Figures extrapolated from regional research suggest that visitors to the Parish contribute £.5.5million to the South Hams economy. A Facebook page has been set up and a new website is in progress on which there will

be a sign up form on every page to receive monthly e-bulletins, a copy of which will also be circulated to editors of Village Life and the Parish Magazine for publication in print.

**It was RESOLVED** to thank the 17 members of the steering group who have done a lot of work in the last few months and to welcome new members to come along and get involved.

The meeting was adjourned for a member of the HNP steering group to speak about a meeting held at Winsland House, Follaton, who reported it was a lively public consultation arranged by representatives of the land owner to gauge public opinion on the potential development of 150 homes on the site. There is strong local opposition to development. Although Winsland House is in the Harberton Parish, it is considered within the Totnes community and is also of interest to the Dartington Parish. This boundary issue will be discussed at a meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> March where all NP groups will be present. The meeting was reconvened at 9.05pm

**6.3. Community Land Trust (CLT) Update** It was reported that the Heads of Terms for the Options Agreement has been signed. The Option Agreement won't be signed until the land is registered. The third tranche of the HCA grant can now be drawn down, but the deadline for the fourth tranche will be missed. The CLT will apply for a loan of £25,000 from SHDC for the planning process which will be repaid from the final development fund.

**6.4. Town and Parish (TAP) Fund 2013 and 2014 Update.** The County Cllr had reported that the Toll House Cyclepath is scheduled to go ahead. The 2014 application to paint a mural on the primary school playground wall will be presented to the Super Cluster meeting. The Parish Council expressed thanks to Cllr Padfield for his work on the application.

**6.5. Clerk's update** The Clerk recently attended training to prepare for elections in May. Following suggestions from residents a new 'Planning Application' page has been added to the website where all applications on which the Parish Council are requested to give recommendation are listed with links to the planning authority documents. Weather warnings received will be distributed to flood wardens.

**7. Community Benefit Fund Guidelines** The Parish Council had received a letter from Harbertonford Village Hall requesting an explanation as to why their Community Benefit Fund would be paid on completion, not following the grant offer as per the guidelines.

**It was RESOLVED** to reply to the Village Hall committee stating the Parish Council regret any misunderstanding, these are guidelines that may be applied differently in different circumstances and are being revised as we move forward.

It was agreed to review the Community Benefit Fund Guidelines at the next meeting.

**8. Community Bus Service Support** The Parish Council considered a request for feedback on a proposal from Totnes and Rural Community Bus Association (TRCBA) to increase the service within the Parish, along with a request for funds. **It was RESOLVED** to thank TRCBA for the request but to wait for confirmation that the routes have been agreed before further consideration and would like detailed information about what funds requested would be spent on.

**9. Harberton Bus Service** Four letters had been received from residents who would be adversely affected by a reduction or loss of the Harberton bus service. Councillors discussed frequency of buses, the loss of scheduled buses suitable for commuters and buses from Dartmouth and Kingsbridge arriving in Harbertonford within minutes of each other, rather than timetabled more efficiently for Parish users. It was agreed to forward the letters received to Devon County Council with the comment that the Parish Council accept that some of these buses are going to go, but would appreciate a review of the timetable to make it more efficient.

**10. Parish Council Elections** The clerk read out information on arrangements for the election in May as received from the South Hams District Council Electoral Administrator. The election will likely take place on 7<sup>th</sup> May and those wishing to become Parish Councillor candidates may submit nomination forms, by hand to the District Council, between 25<sup>th</sup> March and 9<sup>th</sup> April 2015. Parish Council votes will be counted on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May and declared on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May. The Clerk commented that if there is a contested election in the Parish, the date of the ordinary May meeting must be delayed to allow the agenda to be circulated to elected councillors with sufficient notice.

## 11. Finance

**It was RESOLVED** to make the following payments:

Chq		Invoice	Detail	Amount before VAT	VAT	Total
656	Cat Radford	n/a	Clerk Salary (February) £224.38 Neighbourhood Plan Secretary (January and February) £78.40 Reimbursement Logitech C270HD Webcam £15.99	£315.17	n/a	£315.17
657	DALC	4232	Attendance of Cat Radford at Preparing for Elections on Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> January	£20.00	£5.00	£25.00
658	St Andrew's Church	n/a	St Andrew's Church Community Benefit Fund payment	£500.00	n/a	£500.00

## **12. Correspondence**

- The Devon Countryside Access Forum is appointing new members, the closing date is 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 2015.
- Totnes and Dartmouth Ring and Ride sent a reminder of their service for information to potential users.
- Matt Humphrey sent the Parish Council photographs showing visibility from the Green Lane of the proposed solar development site at Lower Blakemore Farm.
- The Public Transport review is inviting responses to proposals <http://new.devon.gov.uk/publictransportbudget/>
- Resurfacing works on the A381 at Harbertonford are rescheduled to 16/02/15 to 19/02/15 19:00hrs – 07:00hrs.
- The agenda for the Super Cluster Meeting on 11th February 2015 has been received.
- Notification of Coombeshead Solar Farm Construction Traffic re-route has been received.

## **13. E-Circulars** including Rural Services Network, Devon Home Choice, Devon County Council Community News Round-up, Public Sector Executive are available to Councillors on request.

## **14. Matters at the Discretion of the Chairman**

- It was commented that the road surface at the gas station on the Totnes to Avonwick road is horrendous.
- Comment was made about the proposed rainbow crossing in Totnes, remarking on the effort it took to install a zebra crossing in the Parish.
- Further complaints were received about mud on the road at Luscombe Farm and it was reported that a lady had recently slipped over on the mud. The clerk was instructed to write to the farmer Jimmy Palmer pointing out the hazard and to PSCO Broadhurst to report a persistent and dangerous issue.
- It was requested to include an agenda item at the next meeting to discuss a village work day to clear out leaves, thistles and weeds as the village is untidy.
- It was noted that the hedge at Hatchlands Farm has been flailed, which would be in breach of planning conditions.
- It was reported that the pavements in Harbertonford have been treacherous with ice and that access to the grit box in Marl Park can't be accessed due to high tensile wire fence being placed over it. Cllr Beamish agreed to speak with the landowner.
- It was commented that in investigating the land registry with regard to proposals for a new southbound bus shelter it was noted that there is no land registry entry for the car park. The clerk will complete registration with the deeds.

## **15. Confirm Date of Next Meeting** Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015, Harberton Parish Hall.

Meeting closed 10.12pm