

## South Muskham/Little Carlton Parish Council

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7.30pm in the Small Hall, South Muskham Village Hall

**Membership:** C Briggs-Price, K Brown, D Catanach, R Gill, P Jarvis, G Shearing and E Tilbury

Also Present: Two members of the public

18.24/25 **Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies – There were none.

19.24/25 **Declarations of Interest**

There were none to record.

20.24/25 **Chair's Report**

The Chair referred to information circulated to Members regarding FP1 and 1A and the problems around access which had been reported to the Rights of Way team. The team had confirmed that an inspection of the steps had been undertaken and contractors were being arranged to cut the vegetation and replace the handrail. An extra waymark post will be installed at the Kelham end where the path leaves the river to identify where the Right of Way goes. The issue with the path through the crops not being re-instated had been passed to the Enforcement Officer.

### Open Session

The Chair suspended the meeting at 7.36pm for the Open Session.

A resident asked whether there was any update on the Great North Road Solar Park.

As this item was on the agenda, with permission of Members, the Chair brought forward Agenda Item 8.1

21.24/25 **To consider correspondence received from GNR Solar & NG+ regarding attendance at a Parish Event**

The Chair referred to the 6.1% response rate from the online survey held recently. It was considered vital that further consultation and engagement with the community be undertaken.

The Joint Parishes Action Group, which consists of representatives from parishes affected by the proposal had now met twice. The Group was there to put forward the views of the parishes as a joint response was taken more seriously by the Planning Inspectorate rather than individual responses. It had become apparent that the parishes should engage with the developers, Elements Green, as if parishes didn't engage they would not be able to mitigate any changes before the final plans were submitted. Engagement with NG+, the community arm, was also considered vital to ensure that affected communities did not miss out on the funding of any potential projects.

The loss of prime agricultural land may be a major concern for the Planning Inspectorate but with a General Election now looming political views were not as clear cut as before.

One major concern for South Muskham was the inclusion of a Visitor Centre off Crow Lane, which was not considered a viable location for such a Centre. By engagement with Elements Green, concerns could be raised and alternative suggestions put forward.

An invitation was extended to Elements Green and NG+ to hold a drop in session for parishioners, but this had been declined, with the reason being that they would be looking to holding similar events in the Autumn.

They had stated that, at this stage, they were keen to engage with Parish Council's directly to have a focused and meaningful discussion on specific elements of the published design and opportunities for NG+ to support local initiatives.

Their proposed agenda for such a meeting would be:

- Discussions around any potential visual amenity changes requested by parishioners
- Any potential planting requests
- Any ideas from the parish on footpath routing and potential permissive routes
- Public non-statutory consultation outcomes, e.g., responses to the public feedback
- NG+ opportunities

The company were anticipating a second phase of community consultation in September, which would involve holding another series of public information events.

It was noted that the maps on the Elements Green website had not been updated since January 2024.

The Chair outlined again that engagement with parishioners was key and a way had to be found for that to be meaningful.

22.24/25 **To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

23.24/25 **Matters arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere on the Agenda**

The Clerk was asked to arrange a date before end of October for a joint meeting with the Community Flood Wardens to update on the Emergency Plan.

The Clerk updated Members on where responsibility for the enforcement of parking issues lay, particularly on the pavement, as experienced on Great North Road. This was no longer a Police matter but came under the powers of the Civil Enforcement Officers employed by Nottinghamshire County Council.

- 24.24/25 **Financial Issues**
- 24.1 To record Receipts  
There were none.
- 24.2 Invoices for payment:
- Clerk's Wages (May) - £318.60
  - HMRC PAYE (May) - £79.60
  - Norwell Groundcare – Inv 1085 - £90
  - Bank Charges - £8.00 & £2.00
  - Martin Talbot Builder – Telephone Box - £129.89
  - Arthur Gallagher – Insurance Renewal - £781.77
  - Flower Barn - £40
  - Names – Renewal of Domain Name & Authentication - £88.78
- 24.3 To agree to establish a Direct Debit relating to payments for the new EDF account  
It was AGREED that a Direct Debit could be established for EDF, which was part of the requirement to secure the newly negotiated tariff.
- 24.4 To note completion of the Internal Audit of the financial accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.  
The Clerk advised that the Internal Audit had now been complete, and the report had been signed by the Auditor.
- 24.5 To agree the Exemption Certificate for the 2023-24 Financial Year  
Members received, noted and agreed the Exemption Certificate as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and AGREED that it should be signed by the Chairman.
- 24.6 To consider the Annual Governance Statement for the 2023-24 Financial Year  
Members received, noted and agreed the Accounting Statement as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and AGREED that it should be signed by the Chairman.
- 24.7 To consider the Accounting Statement for the 2023-24 Financial Year  
Members received, noted and agreed the Accounting Statement as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and AGREED that it should be signed by the Chairman.
- 24.8 To receive an update on the opening of a new Business Account  
The Clerk advised that documentation had been received which would now need to be signed by authorized signatories, prior to the account being opened.
- 25.24/25 **Planning**
- 25.1 To receive correspondence from Newark & Sherwood District Council regarding Planning Appeals at Solar Farms at Knapthorpe Lodge & Muskham Wood  
Members noted correspondence received from Newark & Sherwood District Council regarding a recent Planning Committee meeting that was held under closed session.
- The Clerk had submitted concerns to the Planning Officer responsible for the two applications, which had been passed on to the Business Manager. In the correspondence received, which was in the public domain, it had been explained that the information was considered exempt (i.e., not for publication) because

disclosure might prejudice the appeal process, potentially impacting on the outcome.

The letter further went on to explain that, in simple terms this meant that the District Council, as Local Planning Authority, needed to debate in private the relative risks of continuing to defend its position of refusing both solar farms given the new material planning considerations since its original decision.

It had been confirmed that a long and detailed debate was taken by all Councillors present where extensive consideration was given to the Council's defence on the three key main issues:

- Effect on the stock of agricultural land as a resource
- The impact on landscape character; and
- The visual impact of the scheme.

With significant concern and consternation regarding the number of such proposals in the locality and the ability/difficulties in being able to defend such Appeals, when considered in light of local and national policy as well as other material planning considerations, the resolution of the Planning Committee was that the Council would not defend these two Appeals. This means that the District Council will no longer present a case to the Planning Inspectorate which argues that planning permission should be refused. Technically, there are now outstanding Appeals for both solar farms. It is therefore for the Planning Inspectorate to now make a decision knowing the Council will no longer argue that permission should be refused. The District Council had made clear to the Planning Inspectorate that residents will still wish to comment as part of their consideration of the Appeals. The Parish Council will still have the opportunity to make further representations to the Planning Inspectorate.

The Clerk advised that the residents had been kept updated and a copy of the letter received had been forwarded to them for information.

25.2 To note North Muskham Parish Council's intention to include part of the Parish of South Muskham in its Neighbourhood Plan and the requirement for a six week consultation

The Clerk referred to the intention of North Muskham Parish Council to include part of the Parish of South Muskham in its Neighbourhood Plan. As such, there would be a requirement for a six week consultation, the details of which had not yet been received.

26.24/25 **Parish Council Matters**

26.1 To consider correspondence received from GNR Solar & NG+ regarding attendance at a Parish Event

After discussion, it was AGREED that the July meeting of the Parish Council be moved to Wednesday, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024. The Clerk was asked to extend an invitation to Elements Green and NG+ to attend that meeting.

Once attendance had been confirmed, all residents would be notified of the meeting and invited to attend. Members were asked to consider any questions they would like to raise and bring to the meeting.

26.2 To receive an update on the Joint Parishes Action Group and the consideration of funding towards a planning consultant

The Chair referred to a suggestion made by the Joint Parishes Action Group that Parishes considered a contribution towards funding a planning consultant to assist in responding to the Elements Green solar park proposal. It had been suggested this be based on the number of people on the Register of Electors, but it was not yet known how much would be required.

After discussion, Members AGREED in principle to a contribution subject to final approval when costs were known.

26.3 To note the invitation to the Southwell Workhouse Bicentenary Commemoration & Community Event – 13<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Members received and noted the invitation.

27.24/25 **Beckett Field**

27.1 To consider a quotation for new windows

Members noted that one quotation had been received for replacement windows at the Beckett Field pavilion. Two additional quotations were requested, which would be brought back to the July meeting for consideration.

28.24/25 **Flooding, Drainage & Emergency Planning**

28.1 To consider quotations received for the installation of a walkway to the Resilience Store at South Muskham Village Hall

The Clerk advised that one quotation had been received for the installation of a walkway. Additional quotations were awaited and would be brought back to the July meeting for consideration.

28.2 Environment Agency – Brammersack

Members noted the response from the Environment Agency

29.24/25 **Highways**

29.1 Highways Issues Logged

The Clerk advised that work has been requested to clear the gullies. After discussion, the Clerk was asked to request a timeline for completion of the work and to also ask for a deeper clean of the pipes to be made, not just the top of the drain.

The Clerk was asked to log overhanging vegetation that was blocking the red flashing lights on either side of the approach to the level crossing on Church Lane.

29.2 Interactive Speed Sign

The Clerk advised that no further information had been received on when the sign would be installed.

- 29.3 To receive details on the Development Consent Order submitted for the A46 Dualling and to consider a response  
After discussion, it was AGREED that the Chair would review the Order and, in conjunction with the Clerk, put together a response prior to the deadline of 14<sup>th</sup> July 2024.
- 30.24/25 **Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils**  
30.1 June Newsletter  
Members received and noted the Newsletter as circulated.
- 31.24/25 **Correspondence Received**  
16.1 There was none to note.
- 32.24/25 **Other matters arising not on the agenda**  
32.1 Cllr Jarvis referred to a collapsed manhole cover on Bathley Lane, which had been surrounded by red and white barriers for nearly two months. The Clerk would take this matter up direct with highways.  
32.2 Cllr Shearing referred to Police activity in the village, including a road closure and a plane circling overhead. The Clerk was asked to try and establish what had happened.

**Next Meeting** – Parish Council - Wednesday, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024 at 7.30pm at the Village Hall, South Muskham  
The meeting was closed at 9.08pm

Minutes approved as a true record –