

# BISHOP'S ITCHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting 7 December 2020 at 7.30pm Remote Meeting

### Present

Cllr Dugmore (Chairman)	Cllr Bougoussa	Cllr Christian-Carter
Cllr Gates	Cllr Kettle	Cllr D Mann
Cllr M Mann	Cllr Thomas	Cllr Tressler

### Absent

1 Vacant seat

### In Attendance

Karen Stevens - Clerk to the Council  
Cllr A Crump – WCC  
PC Matt Simms – Warwickshire Police

### Public

6

### 20/157 Apologies

None.

### 20/158 Declarations of Interest

Cllr M Mann declared a personal interest in item 20/161 Planning Matters. It was agreed that he could participate in the discussion

### 20/159 Dispensations

None.

### 20/160 Public Forum

James Hartley-Bond (JHB) introduced himself as the applicant on behalf of Low Carbon for the planning application 20/2839/FUL. JHB said that most people will now be aware of the proposal. The application is for a 49.9 mega watt solar farm and this was submitted to SDC on 7 October 2020 although it took several weeks to be validated. The determination deadline that is being worked towards is 1 February 2021 but currently applications are taking up to six months. The application follows two periods of consultation during July to September 2020. Eighty-one pieces of individual feedback were received – 49% positive, 17% neutral and 34% negative. The top three areas of concern were:

1. Ecology – retain and enhance the species and habitats on site
2. Landscape and visual impact (some areas have now come out of those proposed in the original scheme)
3. Traffic and construction related issues including public rights of way (no longer developing around the public rights of way within the site).

JHB advised that he was happy to take any question now or any that arise after the meeting. Cynthia Bettany advised that she was here to listen as she is from Knightcote and is a member of Burton Dassett Parish Council.

## **20/161 Planning Matters**

20/02839/FUL – Land near to Bishop's Itchington. Construction of a solar farm (82.5ha) together with associated work, equipment, and necessary infrastructure.

A significant amount of documentation has been provided as part of the planning application including the Construction Transport Management Plan that JHB had referred to, several ecological surveys, community involvement etc. The Planning Working Group had summarised the information and identified some of the relevant/conflicting elements in the previously circulated Discussion Document.

Construction Transport Management Plan (CTMP) – number of points of concern especially with the rigour that has been applied to the plan itself. As a village sitting on a major road, we have a significant problem with traffic therefore there are several aspects of the CTMP that need to be addressed, re-visited, or clarified. The detailing of the routes that would be used – significant omissions i.e. the appropriateness of HGV's through Deppers Bridge with the 7.5cwt weight limit (aware that WCC Highways are cognisant of these omissions and have drawn attention to them already). We would like to see some clarification on the number of vehicle movements as throughout the plan it is very inconsistent in the way it has been described:- the single trip, two way trip, and the vehicle movement terminology has been used interchangeably, therefore it is difficult to determine whether it is 699 deliveries, 1500 vehicle movements, 3000 vehicle movements and there is even an example in the Plan of  $2 \times 7 = 12$ . Therefore, we are puzzled and confused with the standard of rigour that has gone into this especially as it is supposed to underpin such a significant application which will have an enormous impact on the traffic and travel infrastructure of such a small the village such as ours. We are also not sure if 1,500 vehicles movements of a 15m HGV on a 'c' class road can be considered as a low number of construction related trips for example etc. An issue raised by residents concerns the heritage and archaeological work particularly the potential misinterpretation between the two village sites Upper (Bishop's) or Lower Itchington (Nether Itchington/Old Town/Icetone) and what is of concern is that the sites seem to be subsumed under the modern site of Bishop's Itchington as it currently stands which is Upper Itchington, when we know from historical record that the main settlement was at Old Town, Lower Itchington and this site dates back to 1034 and therefore is the senior of the two settlements in archaeological terms. This is all subsumed as all the documents talk about is the distance from the proposed site to the village of Bishop's Itchington, yet this is plainly the wrong way round.

Cllr's were advised that the last two pages of the previously circulated discussion document address these heritage points – the error actually starts with the fact that the desk-based assessment states that in the Doomsday Book it was our current village, Bishop's Itchington that was mentioned – this is an error, it was in fact Nether Itchington /Old Town/Icetone that was actually mentioned and it was a substantial settlement in medieval times. The rest of the information in the Planning Working Group's Discussion Document under the section that begins Heritage Archaeology, looks at the Medieval Period, Romano British Period and goes through all the various factors that we need to consider and that SDC also need to consider.

Attention was drawn to the fact that WCC Archaeology was a missing Statutory Consultee even though we are aware that this body is used by other LPA's e.g. Rugby Borough Council. The District Councillor (Chris Kettle), advised that, although they are not a statutory consultee, if they do respond to the proposed application, their comments will be taken into consideration.

It was highlighted that there are elements in so many areas where there are major questions and also many unanswered questions, e.g. Sustainability Energy (CS3) whereby it states that outcomes must have positive outcomes for local communities. The Parish Council is unsure how this development will benefit/have positive outcomes for the community as the power generated would go into the national grid and therefore does not benefit the local community. Plus, when you look at the impact, particularly from a visual perspective, as it is a very flat area of land in a bowl overlooked by hills on most sides, the impact visually as well as on the use of the land is going to be massive.

Other elements that raised questions included the wildlife/habitat survey – references made in it to a specific report that has been identified as confidential, and also significant redaction of the Statement of Community Involvement because of what was asked by the public, although, having seen the original unredacted document, those points do not describe any significant detail that would endanger those particular mammals. A query has been sent to the planning officer whether a suitably redacted version of that report would have been appropriate to share with a statutory consultee such as ourselves so that we can at least understand the context of the question and without knowing the location of the habitats of these particular animals at least an indication of the numbers involved would have put us in a position to understand whether the mitigations being offered are at the very least appropriate /sufficiently numerous. Whilst this could be argued that this is a procedural point to be taken up with SDC planning, it does leave us a gap in terms of whether it is or is not appropriate.

Points in a planning context - it is not just the location, it is also the size – Stratford District Council’s own Renewable Energy Landscape Sensitivity Study which forms part of CS3 and which must be taken into account for any proposals that fall under that planning policy, the maximum size for the Feldon Vale Farmlands is up to 25ha (anything over this size is designated as medium/high risk) therefore, the size of Low Carbon’s Solar Farm is totally ruled out. It was noted that the proposed Solar Farm is 82.5ha, whereas the BUAB of the village is only 50ha.

In keeping with past representations on solar farms within the area, it was stated the Parish Council has two options – to support or object and either option will need solid material planning consideration to support or object.

Members said their thanks to the members of Planning Working Group for the summary provided.

It was RESOLVED to OBJECT to this planning applications as follows

The planning application and associated documents contravenes several Core Strategy Planning Policies. Secondly, there is a number of omissions, misleading statements, and the need for more details in the associated documentation.

From analysis undertaken the response against Core Strategy planning policies are:

Core Strategy	
CS1	Sustainable development - <b>No</b>
CS3	Sustainable Energy - <b>No</b>
CS4	Water, Environment and Risk of Flood – <b>No</b> (requires a modification on behalf of the applicant in line with the response from the Environment Agency)
CS5	Landscape - <b>No</b>
CS6	Natural Environment - <b>No</b> (missing some information on biodiversity/protected species etc.)
CS7	Green Infrastructure - <b>No</b>
CS8	Historic Environment – <b>No</b>
CS9	Design and Distinctiveness – <b>No</b> (will damage and destroy features that contribute positively to this area)
CS11	Cotswolds’ Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – <b>question mark</b> , as the boundary is a little was away
AS10	Countryside and Villages – <b>No</b> (due to loss of agricultural land (not necessarily higher quality land but has grown crops on it since the end of WW2 (winter barley/winter wheat) therefore quality land for growing crops).
	Renewable Energy Landscape Sensitivity Study – does not meet the criteria (c/f CS3)

	Construction Transport Management Plan – Any statements in that plan that suggest or imply a limitation to number of movements and ambiguities in the CTMP, means it needs to be revised and re-issued, and any commitments and mitigation measures to resolve road safety issues, and any commitments to limit the number of vehicle movements and timings of them happening, and the mitigations measures taking place and a conditional survey on the roadways are all present. In addition, the Parish Council requests all these are conditions as part of any planning decision
	HS2 – capacity/ability of the roads around Southam to deal with HS2 work/deliveries traffic, diversionary traffic, and traffic for solar farm build

It was agreed to object to the planning application 20/02830/FUL due to the: number of material planning considerations, listed above, which are in conflict with current planning policies; inconsistencies identified in the CMTP; numerous omissions, misleading statements, and the need for more details; and the elements we would request are made specific and conditioned as appropriate to ensure they can be properly enforced.

(Proposed by Cllr Christian-Carter and seconded by Cllr D Mann. Vote: 7 for, 0 against and 2 abstentions (Cllr C Kettle due to being a District Councillor and Cllr M Mann due to personal interest)).

## **20/162 Finance**

### **1 Monthly Financial Report**

The budget report for the month ending November 2020 as per Appendix A had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were no questions.

### **2 Bank Reconciliation Report**

The bank reconciliation report for November 2020 had been completed by the Clerk. Cllr Kettle to check it.

### **3 Accounts for Payment**

Cllrs D Mann and Gates volunteered to check the invoices and authorise the bank payments.

### **4 Preparation of 2021/22**

The Finance Group had struggled to meet but would meet before the next Parish Council meeting so that deadlines for the precept return would be adhered to.

The Clerk had completed the forecast spreadsheet and this was showing a possible deficit for the year of up to £35,000 as opposed to the forecasted deficit of £4,000. If this is correct, reserves would need to be used to underpin the deficit.

## **20/163 Playground Equipment**

Recently, two items of equipment have been repaired. Currently, one item, the hammock, is broken and beyond economical repair. A document has been circulated showing possible replacements, ranging in cost up to a maximum cost of £2,270. Cllr Thomas would like the Playground Working Group to choose the new piece of equipment and as such had circulated the document giving the alternatives together with their costs. Currently £1,500 has been budgeted for a replacement.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would approve a spend up to the value of the most expensive item on the circulated proposal sheet and delegate the decision on which item within that list is chosen to the Playground Working Group but that a budgetary note is taken forward into next years budget whereby we factor in any excess over this years budget and thereby balanced this off accordingly. (proposed by Cllr Dugmore and seconded by Cllr Tressler).

**Meeting closed at 8.38pm.**

Signed.....Chairman Date.....

**APPENDIX A**

**Budget Report - 7 December 2020**  
**Comparison between 01/04/2020 and 07/12/2020 inclusive:**

		Budget	Reserve	Actual Net	Balance
<b>INCOME</b>					
	<b>Bishops Itchington Parish Council</b>				
10	Precept	£89,000.00	£0.00	£89,000.00	£0.00
20	Council Tax Support Grant	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
30	Burials	£2,000.00	£0.00	£3,530.00	£1,530.00
40	Sec 136 & Other Reimbursements	£1,300.00	£0.00	£0.00	£-1,300.00
50	Playing Field	£400.00	£0.00	£218.27	£-181.73
60	Interest	£450.00	£0.00	£318.40	£-131.60
70	Grants	£0.00	£0.00	£9,100.00	£9,100.00
80	Misc	£250.00	£0.00	£77.80	£-172.20
90	VAT Refund	£0.00	£0.00	£2,874.86	£2,874.86
100	Pavilion Fund	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	<b>Total Bishops Itchington Parish Council</b>	<b>£93,400.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£105,119.33</b>	<b>£11,719.33</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
	<b>Bishops Itchington Parish Council</b>				
200	Salaries & Expenses	£30,380.00	£0.00	£27,001.60	£3,378.40
210	Councillor Allowances	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
220	Administration	£6,767.00	£0.00	£7,207.96	£-440.96
230	Grounds Maintenance	£23,232.00	£0.00	£16,687.22	£6,544.78
240	Cemetery & Churchyard	£4,743.00	£0.00	£1,600.97	£3,142.03
250	Playing Field	£10,763.00	£0.00	£8,970.47	£1,792.53
260	Grants	£7,500.00	£0.00	£8,158.00	£-658.00
270	Neighbourhood Plan	£2,500.00	£0.00	£4,440.00	£-1,940.00
280	Other Expenditure	£1,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,000.00
290	VAT	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
300	Contingency	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
310	Parish Office	£5,190.00	£0.00	£3,293.36	£1,896.64
320	Pavilion Project	£5,000.00	£0.00	£6,382.91	£-1,382.91
	<b>Total Bishops Itchington Parish Council</b>	<b>£97,575.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£83,742.49</b>	<b>£13,832.51</b>

