**Minutes of Meeting held at 6.45 pm on Monday 13th February 2023**

**at Hart Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllrs. J. Littlefair, T. Britcliffe, J. Quarmby

**In Attendance:** M. Ireland, Clerk, James Wheater and Kirsty McGuigan, for Transmission Investment presentation, Ward Cllr Cassidy, 2 PCSOs from 7.00pm, 31 residents.

The Vice-Chairman welcomed everyone and explained that he would be taking the chair for the Transmission Investment presentation, as the Parish Council had agreed the Chairman, as a local landowner, excluded himself from all matters relating to developments along the A179.

1. **Public Forum:**  Ms. McGuigan opened her presentation by showing a plan of the proposed site at Hartmoor, and explaining the benefits of selecting this particular site. She explained that her company had been awarded the contract by the National Grid; that the company had not spoken with the Parish Council beforehand as this was company policy in a tender situation. The application was for a Platform and Synchronous Compensators to be built on the site of the current Whelley Hill farmstead. The company was well aware of local feelings about the number of proposed developments around the village, and had therefore opted to stay south of the A179, close to other industrial sites. There would be a 9m high building, housing the compensators; visualisations were currently being prepared showing the development in situ: from the bus stop opposite the site; from the entrance to the village; from the Public Right of Way from Elwick and from Worset Lane. None as yet from the A19 and Cllr Britcliffe suggested this would be needed.

Cllr Britcliffe stated that residents were not happy that the developer had not consulted beforehand, and felt it was disrespectful of the local community. Residents present applauded this statement.

The chair of the meeting opened the floor for questions, (response in brackets) which included:

* Why does it have to be at Hartmoor and not on a brownfield site? (National Grid requirement, no other sub-stations available within demand area/cost)
* Is the Grange Farm application in Durham County going ahead? (Not known)
* Why does the grid need stabilising when it is within 8 miles of a nuclear power station? (Bringing renewable energy – will need to come back to you as this is a very technical question)
* Why not at East Boldon, where there is plenty of land available? (Not sure, will come back to us)
* Will this bring more traffic? (Acutely aware of traffic concerns – construction traffic will be intense for first 6 months)
* Have you factored in the two massive housing developments being built further sown the A179 near Hartlepool town? (No response)
* When is proposed to start? (Once planning consent given – hopefully 2025)
* What will happen to the farmland? (It will be completely covered by solar farm required for Electric Forecourt)
* Does this fall within Offgen Rio2 Stage 2 timescales? (Don’t know)
* Do the solar farms have a link with you? (N0, all independent)
* Are you aware of the rising number of accidents at the A19/A179 recently and there is no water supply there, should there be a fire at your facility? (Fire Regulations apply to the development)
* Have you any similar development up and running elsewhere in UK? (One being developed in Scotland).

Cllr Britcliffe then posed some questions on behalf of the Parish Council, viz:

* Can you understand why residents are so upset by this application, without you first consulting the community? Why not? when other similar companies have taken the time – it shows a complete lack of transparency. (Business decision not to discuss beforehand)
* How will your application fit with the Electric Vehicle Charging application made by Gridserve? (None of them own the site as yet)
* What direct benefit will there be to the community? Will there be a community fund for example? (No mention of such) A resident commented that the developer would make £14Billion.
* How many long-term jobs will be created? (None).
* Are you amenable to amending your plans? (Possibly – will take this back).
* How will it be powered? Electricity drawn from the Grid).
* If HBC refuses planning permission? (Appeal to Sec of State/High Court).

Cllr Britcliffe informed that as soon as the Planning Application became available, the Parish Council would make it available to residents via the Hart Hub.

He summarised by saying to the representative of Transmission Investment “Hart feels really let down”.

*The presenters, PCSOs and residents left the meeting at 7.30 pm.*

1. **Apologies**: Cllrs Brown, Park and Parker, Ward Cllrs Cook and Leedham – accepted.

Cllr Littlefair resumed the Chair.

1. **Declarations of Interest**: None
2. **Police Report**: The PCSOs had had to leave the meeting due to being called away on another police matter.
3. **Minutes of Meeting held on 10th January 2023:** All present being in agreement, it was r**esolved** to accept the draft Minutes a true record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

*Cllr Britcliffe gave his apologies as he had another appointment and left the meeting at 7.45pm.*

**The Clerk noted that as the meeting was no longer quorate, no decisions could be made.**

1. **Co-option:** The co-option of a new Councillor could not be completed due to lack of quoracy.
2. **Matters Arising**: ***(a)*** ***Car Park gate*** – Cllr Park had forwarded the design for the car park gate installation, but it was not known whether application for planning permission had been made. ***(b)*** ***Car park sign*** – Cllr Littlefair had brought the sign to the meeting; he planned to erect it on two metal posts at the entrance to the car park.

***(c) A179 traffic management and South View parking design –*** Mr.Frost had forwarded two designs for the proposed South View car parking, one of which provided more spaces but meant the green areas would be lost; he also noted that HBC had no funds available for this work. Residents to be consulted before any decision made. ***(d) Early Day Motion*** – No response from MP.

**Actions**: Cllr Littlefair to erect sign, Cllr Britcliffe to consult residents of South View.

1. **Draft Parish Charter:** The document had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Whilst both Councillors present endorsed it, there were insufficient present to record a vote. It was agreed that, as the matter was urgent, the Clerk should email all parish Councillors requesting their views via email, to be ratified at the March Meeting. **Action:** Clerk to request Cllrs respond via email.
2. **Chairman’s Report:** Cllr Littlefair reported that:
* He had attended the Rural Crime Forum with the Clerk. Drone practice was being undertaken on local farms and Speedwatch had taken place in the Village, near the Village Hall, which both Cllr Park and he had attended.
* He had attended a meeting of the HBC Audit & Governance Committee.
* Fly tipping had increased dramatically in the last few weeks, especially along Hart Back Lane and Worset Lane.
* The Clerk had informed she wished to retire shortly and recruitment for a replacement was now underway.
1. **Ward Councillor’s Report**: Cllr Cassidy reported that:
* the issue of Fly Tipping had been raised at the HBC Neighbourhoods Committee; the booking issue at the tip had been discussed but it was introduced because the police were complaining of traffic queuing in the road, which was causing obstruction. Whilst he recognised the booking system was not perfect, it was necessary to manage traffic flow. He noted that the tip at Haverton Hill did not require pre-booking and was open to anyone. The Clerk queried why HBC had not identified an alternative/extra site for a tip, where traffic would not cause such problems.
* The Committee had agreed a fee of £32 per household for collection of one bin of garden waste, with a £10 charge for a second bin. He noted that HBC was one of the last Local Authorities to introduce a charge for collection of garden waste.
* He had been pleased to see the defibrillator had now been passed into the ownership of the Parish Council.
* He preferred the second option of the tow designs offered by Peter Frost for South View. parking.
* He reminded everyone that photo identification would be needed in order to vote at the next election, in May.
1. **Maintenance Committee Report**: No report received.
2. **Financial Reports:** The Clerk presented the financial reports, which were **approved.**

 **Receipts: £ Payments: £**

Interest (Dec & Jan) 8.75 Bank charges (Dec & Jan) 11.60

D.M. Ireland (contribution to tel/broadband) 245.00

**Total 8.75 Total 256.60**

1. **Correspondence:** (i) HBC re: Armed Forces Covenant – postponed to March agenda.
2. **Planning Applications:** None received

1. **Matters of Concern to Councillors:** None raised
2. **Date of next Meeting of the Parish Council:** 6.45pm Monday 13th March 2023 at Hart Village Hall.

*Meeting closed at 8.35pm.*