 **Minutes of Meeting held at 6.45 pm on Monday 13th June 2022**

**at Hart Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllrs. J. Littlefair, K. Brown, T. Britcliffe, J. Quarmby, K. Park and A. Parker

**In Attendance:** M. Ireland, Clerk, Ward Cllr Cassidy, Ms. Rachel Ness, Clearstone Energy

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Parker to her first PC meeting, and invited Ms Ness to make her presentation.

1. **Battery Storage at Worset Lane Proposal:** Ms Ness gave a Powerpoint presentation which covered the need for battery storage for renewable energy, such as wind and solar energy, which was intermittent, being dependant on the weather. Currently this meant that at times of greatest demand, there was insufficient energy to meet needs, a problem which would be resolved by having excess energy stored in batteries. This particular proposal was part of the National Grid’s ‘Pathfiinder’ project, designed to address critical infrastructure where there is a regional deficiency, such as at Hartlepool, where this site would provide approximately 200mg of storage capacity. The reason the Worset Lane site had been chosen by the National Grid was because of the amount of renewable energy production in the near vicinity and easy access to the main grid. Clearstone Energy was committed to improving biodiversity and low carbon emissions on the site by at least 10% and the site was to be positively managed to benefit nature. The extremely large batteries were to be placed at the lowest point on the site – there was no fixed design at present, as consultations were still ongoing. (NB: This is a pre-application consultation exercise – which Councillors welcomed). The actual planning application will probably be submitted in July. There will be a 12-month construction period, with approximately 1 to 2 articulated lorries per day accessing the site, mostly via the A179. She noted that 2 pieces of equipment would be over 15m tall and these would be brought via the port at Hartlepool. The site would have a 40-year life expectancy, then be decommissioned and the land returned to agricultural usage. Once the site was ‘live’ there would be minimal traffic, and no large vehicles at all.

Clllr Britcliffe requested a photomontage beforehand, to which Ms. Ness agreed. As yet there had been no request for an Environmental Impact Assessment but if Councillors wished to see the plans these were available on the Planning Portal under H/2022/0198.

Councillors appreciated the need to store electricity at low demand periods, but asked about the community benefit for local residents - Ms. Ness explained that there would be no major employment generated, though some minor consultancy and planting contracts would be available to local businesses. Any financial agreement would not be part of the Planning discussions, as Clearstone did not wish to appear to be influencing inappropriately. She would herself now be the main contact for the PC with Clearstone Energy.

Ms Ness was thanked for her presentation and left the meeting at 7.30 pm.

1. **Public Forum:** No members of the public present
2. **Apologies:** Parish Cllr Simmons,Ward Cllrs Cook and Leedham.
3. **Declarations of Interest**: None made
4. **Peter Frost, Highways Manager, HBC:** Mr. Frost covered a number of issues of concern previously raised by Councillors, including:

* Hart Reservoir issues – the owner has agreed to keep the road clean; HBC will monitor the situation. Cllr Park noted that Planning Enforcement should insist that every construction site should have wheel cleaning available on site.
* A179 – the current plan was to have a 2-lane approach into town, with only 1 lane from the Hart roundabout.
* The Chairman noted the crossroad signs at the A179 approaches to Hart Back Lane and School Lane needed replacing urgently.
* Cllr Park requested new signs to the village from the A179, as the current signage was not clear.
* Elwick Bypass – the Compulsory Purchase Orders had not yet been initiated.
* Hart Back Lane – several Councillors noted that since the resurfacing, traffic was now travelling too fast along the lane, where there were several blind spots; there were still massive potholes at the A179 end of this road and Worset Lane.
* Plans were being progressed for South View; Cllr Britcliffe noted that not all residents in the road were supportive of extra parking being made available, and asked that the designs be sent to the PC to share with residents before any decision was made.
* Traffic calming for Front Street was currently being redesigned, as following consultations with the emergency services, the original plans were deemed not suitable.

The Chairman thanked Mr Frost warmly for coming to speak to the PC in person, and noted it was much appreciated.

1. **Police Report:** None received; the Clerk was requested to raise this with the local Inspector. She noted that there had been a considerable number of farm break-ins and thefts of vehicles, equipment, tools etc in recent weeks, around the Hartlepool rural area and asked that farmers be notified to be extra vigilant. **Action:** Clerk to contact Hartlepool Inspector regarding attendance/reports.
2. **Minutes of Annual Parish Council Meeting and the Ordinary Meeting that followed it, 9th May 2022:** – Cllr Britcliffe proposed and Cllr Brown seconded the adoption of the minutes. All present being in agreement, it was **resolved** to accept the draft Minutes a true record.
3. **Matters Arising**: (a) ***Grass cutting at The Darlings*** – The Clerk reported that the contractor had stated the extra cost for cutting the 2 areas of grass would be £25 per cut. She was asked to contact Gentoo to state the PC would be willing to undertake this for the current financial year, at the residents’ request, if gentoo was in agreement, and potentially for a longer period, though we would appreciate a financial contribution from them. The letter to include an explanation of the agreement with HBC. **Action:** Clerk to write to Gentoo accordingly.
4. **Chairman’s Report:** Cllr Littlefair reported that:

* Cllr Cassidy had been appointed as Chair of HBC Neighbourhood Services Committee and offered congratulations;
* There had been break-ins at several farms around the village;
* A new supply of Jubilee mugs was now available for delivery for all those who were missed on the first delivery. Mugs were to be given to the 3 Ward Cllrs as well.
* He had met with and explained the background, of HBC adopting the land in 1977, to the couple at Holyrood, who have now removed the hedging they had planted and stopped cutting the trees, however the line of sight is still compromised doe to raised borders. Cllr Cassidy was requested to investigate the matter. **Action:** Cllr Cassidy to investigate line of sight issue at 1, Holyrood.

1. **Ward Councillors’ Report:** Cllr Cassidy reported thathe had been appointed to Chair of Neighbourhood Services Committee and Cllr Cook to Chair of Audit & Governance Committee; Cllr Leedham had been appointed Vice-Chairman of Children’s Services Committee; all were congratulated by Parish Councillors.

There had been an Engagement Meeting at Hartfields on 21st May, where residents had shown a willingness to compromise, to have the Medical Centre open on specific days for those who are vulnerable.

1. **Queen’s Platinum Jubilee:** The Chairman reported it had been a very good event, and recognised that a lot of people had put a great deal of work into ensuring it happened; houses around the village were dressed, the beacon lit, a dance, parades/processions and picnics held, and our MP visited. The Clerk was requested to write to the organising Committee formally to express our thanks for their efforts. The Clerk noted the PC had yet to receive the monies for the Beacon. **Action:** Clerk to write.
2. **Maintenance Committee Report**: Cllr Park had circulated the report in advance. Key points to note –

1.Water standing opposite to Raby Arms. 2. Water standing on road during light rain. 3.The open ditches east of the access lane to North Hart farm are still to be resolved.

4. The sign for The Darlings needs replacing – damaged in January.

5. Large potholes at A179 end of Worset Lane and Hart Back Lane.

Steps at south end of footpath from Clevecoat Walk need to be made safe for pedestrians.

1. **Financial Reports:** The Clerk presented the financial reports, which were **approved.**

**Receipts: £ Payments: £**

Interest (Business Account) 0.16 Bank charges 5.40

BHIB (insurance) 421.15

D.M. Ireland (Jubilee Mugs) 1,049.66

D.M. Ireland (Parish Meeting expenses) 57.22

Affordable landscapes (grass) 856.80

D.M. Ireland (gift for Auditor) 29.00

**Total 0.16 Total 2,419.23**

1. **Correspondence**: None received.
2. **Planning Applications:** None received.
3. **Matters of Concern to Councillors**:

No issues raised but the death of Joe Brown, a former Parish Councillor, was noted with sadness; his funeral is to be at 11.00am on 29th June at Hart church.

1. **Date of next Meeting of the Parish Council:** 6.45pm Monday 11th July 2022 at Hart Village Hall.

**(NB:** Cllr Cassidy gave apologies for both himself and Cllr Leedham for the July meeting in advance)

*Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm*