

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF  
CONEY WESTON PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON THURSDAY 19<sup>th</sup> MAY 2022 AT 7.00PM  
AT CONEY WESTON VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Clarke, Duncan, Ladell & Mihr (Chair)

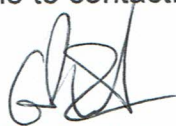
District Councillor A. Smith  
Representative from Euston Estate  
2 members of the public  
A. Morris (Clerk).

Councillor Mihr, Chairman, opened the meeting at 7pm.

- | <b>AGENDA ITEM</b>   | <b>ACTION</b> |
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| <p><b>1. Election of Chair</b> - Outgoing Chair, Cllr Mihr, asked for nominations for the role of Chair for the year. Cllr Clarke nominated to re-elect Cllr Mihr for the Chair role for the forthcoming year. Seconded by Cllr Ladell. The vote was unanimous.<br/>The Clerk asked Cllr Mihr to sign an Acceptance of Office form for this position which he duly did.</p>  |               |
| <p><b>2. Election of Vice Chair</b> – Cllr Mihr asked for nominations for the role of Vice Chair for the year and nominated Cllr Clarke to be re-elected for the role. Seconded by Cllr Duncan. The vote was unanimous.<br/>The Clerk asked Cllr Clarke to sign an Acceptance of Office form for this position which he duly did.</p>  |               |
| <p><b>3. Apologies for absence</b> – apologies had been received from County Councillor Spicer and Cllrs Craig and Flood. Apologies accepted.</p>  |               |
| <p><b>4. Declarations of Interest</b> – declaration of interest was declared by Cllr Duncan on the Playing Field.</p>  |               |
| <p><b>5. Scheme of public speaking</b> – none received</p>   |               |
| <p><b>6. County Councillor's Report</b> – in Cllr Spicer's absence she had submitted a written report.</p>   |               |
| <p><b>7. District Councillor's Report</b> – Cllr Smith advised that Coney Weston village was not involved in the West Suffolk Local Plan initiative - the date of the beginning of the consultation is 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022. CWPC will receive an invitation to be present at a virtual meeting of the plan group which will take place on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022.</p> |               |

Cllr Duncan asked Cllr Smith to help him contact Suffolk Highways regarding the ownership of the bridge in Rushford. Cllr Smith will let Cllr Duncan know who to contact.

**Cllr Smith**



Geoff Mihr, Chair

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Andrea Morris, Clerk

**Cllr Mihr, as Chair, brought forward item 13 on the Agenda for discussion.**

**13. Planning Application DC/22/0445/FUL Solar Farm at Firsfield, Bardwell** – this planning application had been discussed at the Extra Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022 with a decision to postpone a vote on whether to accept the application to the 19<sup>th</sup> May meeting.

Cllr Mihr gave a precis of the discussions and objections raised at the April meeting. Objections were raised by 2 members of the public both of whom live close to the proposed site; the Euston Estate representative qualified the issue of traffic entering the site which is estimated at 4 articulated lorries per day during the construction phase and also on why the choice of the site within the Euston Estate is considered the most suitable. He also confirmed that 1,200 leaflets had been delivered to properties in and around Coney Weston and Bardwell to advise home owners on the proposed farm and of the public consultation event which was held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021 in Bardwell.

Cllr Duncan advised the meeting that he has been in correspondence with our Member of Parliament, Matthew Hancock, on the issue and Mr Hancock had responded to say that the approval of the application is carried out at Parish and County level.

A precis of the main objections to the application is listed below:

1. Traffic nuisance, the planned route is unsuitable for the vehicles due to mainly the width of the c class(minor) roads, the increased traffic levels, and the fact that the route is over the ancient bridge in Rushford, is completely unsuitable.
2. Concerns over food security, with the increasing likelihood of food shortages the council is against agricultural land being used for solar panels. Alternatives suggested include brownfield sites, building roofs and supermarket car parks, would be more appropriate places for solar panels.
3. Concern was expressed at the size of the proposed substation next to Heath Road at the north end of the site.
4. Concerns over who is charged with the dismantling of the site after its suggested lifespan of 35 years.
5. Concerns for the archaeology of the site, and how much actual investigation had been completed.
6. Noise from the piling of hundreds of supports for the solar panels in the construction phase, which we understand is likely to last 9 months.
7. Concerns over the location of this site as it requires over 6 miles of cabling to reach a suitable sub station to connect into the national grid. Therefore this site is not the best location for a solar farm.



Geoff Mihr, Chair



Andrea Morris, Clerk

## AGENDA ITEM

8. Residents concerns over the change of view and amenity for their properties, especially those close to the proposed site whose property values will be adversely affected.

9. General concerns over Solar energy, as electricity is in the highest demand at night and in winter months, when solar power is producing little or no output.

A vote was taken – 2 for and 2 against. Cllr Mihr, as Chair, cast a deciding vote against. The planning application will be recorded on the West Suffolk planning website as objected to by Coney Weston Parish Council.

Clerk

**8. To receive and review the Internal Audit Report for 2021/22** – the report, which had been previously circulated, was praised by the Council as there was only one outstanding item to be completed.

Proposed to accept the report by Cllr Clarke, seconded by Cllr Duncan and voted unanimously.

**9. To approve the following AGAR forms for 2021/22:**

9.1 – Annual Governance Statement

9.2 – Accounting Statement

9.3 – Exemption Certificate

Cllr Mihr proposed to approve all 3 forms, seconded by Cllr Clarke and voted unanimously.

**10. Councillor's Reports:**

10.1 – Cllr Clarke reported successful defibrillator training for 9 residents and that a further session will be scheduled soon.

Cllr Clarke and Mihr reported that they have completed and submitted notification to the land registry forms for the ownership of the playing field land to Damien Parker at West Suffolk Open Spaces – no further updates. There was a disappointing turnout for the recent playground clean up.

10.2 – Jubilee event planning progressing well.

10.3 – No further updates on Neighbourhood Watch or environmental initiatives. Cllr Duncan suggested the PFC may wish to apply to the FA for financial help with the football field.

10.4 – No update in Cllr Flood's absence.

10.5 – Cllr Mihr advised that the planning application for shared driveway at 9&10 Thetford Road has been approved. Cllr Clarke advised that amendments to the original application at the Swan Bowls Club have been asked for by the Planning Dept and have been duly submitted. A second consultation may be required.

10.6 – Cllr Mihr reported that the recent ANPR trial in the village did not yield any results. He has written to Tim Passmore who advised that in order to process registrations which violate speed restrictions extra recruitment needs to take place – this is ongoing.

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Geoff Mihr, Chair



Andrea Morris, Clerk

## AGENDA ITEM

## ACTION

### 11. Financial Report

11.1 - Cllr Clarke proposed to accept previously circulated bank reconciliation and statements dated 13 May 2022. Seconded by Cllr Mihr. Unanimously agreed.

11.2 - Cllr Clarke proposed authorising all payments listed on payment schedule as previously circulated:

11.2.1 – SALC membership subscription for 2022/23 - £189.00, VAT zero, total £189.00;

11.2.2 – Jubilee cash advance (to be reconciled and individual payments listed) – as agreed with Internal Auditor - £750.00, VAT zero, total £750;

11.2.3 – Coney Weston Playing Field Committee grant - £361.05, VAT zero, total £361.05

11.2.4 – Admin payments £531.63 – not itemised due to GDPR

Seconded by Cllr Ladell and voted unanimously.

**12. Report on the Annual Village Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022** – Cllr Mihr advised that the turnout had been good from the village but the responses and requests for initiatives was poor. Council will consider a new format for next year. Cllr Duncan queried the safety aspects of the village pond – Clerk to ask SALC for advice.

SD/Clerk

**14. To consider any correspondence received and matters arising since publication of Agenda** – Clerk advised that she had received the invoice from the Internal Auditor for the preparation and sign off of the AGAR forms for 2021/22 and requested approval:

Invoice total £120.00, VAT zero.

Proposed by Cllr Mihr, seconded by Cllr Duncan and voted unanimously.

**15. Date of next meeting** – Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 7pm in the Village Hall.

Cllr Mihr, Chair, closed the meeting at 9pm.

Andrea Morris  
Clerk & RFO

  
Geoff Mihr, Chair

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Andrea Morris, Clerk