

Welbourn Parish Council

MINUTES OF WELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2024  
IN THE WELBOURN VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 p.m.

**PRESENT**

<b>Parish Councillors</b> Robert Cross (Chair) Steve Spedding Harriet Huntsman Katie Stark	Mark Crosby Louise Troy Steve Ralph Cllr. Michael Bighi
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Mr Daniel Bancroft – Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) District Councillor Lucille Hagues	Mr Jim Fieldhouse – Parish Clerk District Cllr Marianne Overton MBE Mr George Kane - Volunteer
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**Not Present**

Stephen Short	
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1. Chairman's welcome
2. Acceptance of reasons for absence
  - 2.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Short (holidays). These were accepted.
3. Declaration of interest in any matter on the agenda – None declared.
4. Notes of Extraordinary Meeting held on 6 November 2024 to be approved as minutes. Proposed by Cllr Spedding and seconded by Cllr Ralph.
  - 4.1 **Resolved:** That these be accepted as minutes of the meeting.
- 5. Clerk's Report on matters outstanding from 9 October 2024 meeting:**
  - 5.1 A handyman has completed the following work: 1) Closed the gaps in the hedge on Moat Lane; 2) cut back overgrown vegetation on the corner at Castle Hill to increase visibility; 3) Strimmed the sides to the steps leading to the Castle Hill open space; 4) Cleared the outfalls on the beck / pond, and opposite Hall Orchard Lane. Total cost of £140 has been charged by the handyman for this work.
  - 5.2 Our current standing orders need updating. A revised draft of standing orders will be prepared for the February 2025 meeting.
  - 5.3 The Weller Law Group will be instructed to prepare a draft Trust Deed shortly (as per the resolution made at the September 2024 meeting).
  - 5.4 DCR repaired a fault in the air source heating system at the village hall on 17 October 2024. The invoice for this repair has not been received yet.
- 6. Public Forum –** Mr Kane stated that he and another volunteer had cleared the main outfall on The Beck (village pond) and as a result the water level had gone down to its normal level. He asked whether any arrangements were in hand to dredge the pond. The Parish Clerk replied that the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust have recommended that no such work be carried out until a wildlife survey has been carried out.
  - 6.1 **Action Point:** Members will monitor the water level; the handyman will continue to ensure the outfalls are clear; Cllr Crosby will enquire whether a local contractor can provide a price to clear the excess vegetation around the pond perimeter.
- 7. Update on the implementation of the Welbourn Emergency Plan – George Kane (Volunteer Co-ordinator).**

7.1 The outline of the Emergency Plan has already been distributed to Members. The next steps are to appoint an Emergency Plan Steering Group composed of Parish Councillors. Three Councillors have offered to form this Steering Group and plan to meet in early December to assist in taking the Plan forward. This will involve recruiting volunteers to help identify vulnerable villagers.

**7.2 Resolved:** That the Parish Council support the formation of a Steering Group to help develop the Emergency Plan, and endorse advertising for volunteers in the 3 Villages magazine and the Parish Council website.

### **County and District Councillors update**

**8.1** *(Councillors Hagues and Overton's newsletters have been forwarded to Parish Councillors and are published on the Parish Council website).*

8.2 Cllr. Hagues endorsed the Mr Kane's efforts to establish an Emergency Plan and added that she had attended a similar presentation given by North Kesteven District Council (NKDC). She added that NKDC discouraged the use of sandbags because of disposal issues after the emergency. *(Cllr. Hagues left the meeting at 8.30 pm.)*

8.3 Cllr. Overton *(arrived 8.43 pm)* stated that she had met with the Deputy PM and the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution. She was disappointed to report that the Labour Government is pressing ahead with the devolution plans started by the last Government. The devolved body will be called the Greater Lincolnshire Combined Mayoral Authority. The new Mayor will be elected on 1 May 2025. Cllr. Overton is concerned that this new layer of Government will diminish local decision making.

8.4 Cllr. Overton is also very concerned about the proposed Solar Transfer Station at Navenby. The substation will connect Springwell Solar and Fosse Green solar farms (7000 acres) and other solar farms in the area up 18,000 acres in total, to the national grid. The substation will cover approximately 32 acres and will be an 'open air' substation with a maximum height of 15 meters. The solar farm developers are offering very favourable financial inducements to farmers. Cllr. Overton objects on the grounds that much land will be taken out of food production, whilst the roofs of commercial and residential properties could be utilised to harvest solar energy. The planning application for the substation has not been submitted yet.

8.5 Finally, she said that Insulation Grants information is available on the NKDC website.

### **9. Fosse Green Solar Farm – to decide whether a response from Parish Council to the formal consultation is required.**

9.1 The Parish Clerk reminded Councillors that the planning consultation period closes on 2 December 2024. The Council considered the results of the June 2024 survey of residents on the issue of solar farms.

**9.2 Resolved:** That the following comment be submitted to the relevant planning authority:

*A questionnaire was distributed to all households in Welbourn in June 2024 concerning the proposed solar farm developments. It revealed the following: -*

*Of those who responded to survey questionnaire, 75% said they were concerned about the Springwell solar farm, the Fosse Green solar farm and the energy storage developments at Navenby. 75% said they were concerned about the loss of agricultural land and food security. 72% were concerned about the loss of countryside heritage. 72% we're concerned about the visual impact of the substation pylons or panels in open countryside. 75% said they were concerned about large lithium battery storage units. 70% said they were concerned about pylons connecting the solar industrial development to the proposed substation at Navenby. 90% were concerned about the impact of digging underground cables up the cliff edge.*

*To reflect these concerns the Welbourn Parish Council resolved at its meeting on 13 November 2024 to oppose to the proposed development of the Fosse Green solar farm.*

## **10. Current and future maintenance responsibilities**

10.1 Councillors debated the need for preventative maintenance to be carried out around the village.

**10.2 Resolved:** That the Council approve an informal arrangement whereby a handy man be directed by either the Chair, the Parish Clerk, or the Responsible Finance Officer (in the absence of a Council resolution) to perform preventative and reactive maintenance duties up to one day per month on average over the year, with immediate effect.

## **11. Planning Matters to consider and discuss:**

11.1 Application of Proposed Works to Trees Subject to Tree Preservation Order.  
Application reference: 24/1239/TPO

Description of works: Hornbeam (Carpinus Betulus) Reduce tree due to proximity to property by 2 - 3m (blue ring).

Location: Birchdale , 2 Poplar Court, Welbourn, Lincoln.

**11.2 Resolved:** The Parish Council supports the proposed works.

## **12. Notifications of Planning Decisions:**

12.1 NKDC advises that regarding 16 The Green, the compliance date for this Listed Building Enforcement Notice has now passed. It has not been complied with. The notice will remain live on the Land Charges Register and will be picked up in conveyancing searches. It will therefore fall to the next owner of the title to resolve.

12.2 The Parish Council has been informed by NKDC that the locker at 5 Beck Street is unauthorised. The operator will be requested to submit a valid planning application to the Council's Development Control department to regularise this breach of planning control or to take steps to remove the breach of planning control.

**12.3 Resolved:** That these items are noted.

**13. Finance Report:** - From the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO): - To review bank balances, invoices paid since last meeting since, items to be paid before next meeting: -

## **13.1 Accounts value (4 November 2024):**

HSBC Client A/c 611: £4,182.92 (Forge et al) HSBC A/c 772: £8,588.71 (For Precept)	HSBC Bmm A/c 638: £21,175.26 (Reserves) HSBC Business C/A 677: £2,031.72 <b>Bank Total: £35,978.61</b>
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*(Cllr. Huntsman crossed checked these balances with the bank statements.)*

**13.2 Bank reconciled:** £0 discrepancy.

**13.3 Payments made since 9 October 2024**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P.A Ingamells – (£500)</li> <li>• Npower Commercial – (£623.57)</li> <li>• Clerk Pay – (£282.20)</li> <li>• RFO Pay – (£352.80)</li> <li>• Total Gas &amp; Power – (£16.76)</li> <li>• BT Group – (£65.82)</li> <li>• Bank Charges – (£8.00)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HMRC PAY/NIC – (£70.57)</li> <li>• G W King &amp; Sons – (£350)</li> <li>• PKF Littlejohn – (£378)</li> <li>• Mr J G Feildhouse Expense Claim 25 – (£37.93)</li> <li>• R.C.Marshall – (£40)</li> <li>• I.C.Bridal – (£262.20)</li> <li>• Kedal – (£2500.80)</li> </ul>
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**13.4 Payments received since last meeting:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P Gray Allotment – (£20)</li> </ul>
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**13.5 Expected payments within the next meeting (8 January 2025):**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RFO Pay – (£352.80)</li> <li>• Clerk Pay – (£352.80)</li> <li>• RFO Pay – (£352.80)</li> <li>• Clerk Pay – (£352.80)</li> <li>• BT – (£65.82)</li> <li>• Viking Signs – (£202.64)</li> <li>• P.A Ingamells – (£500)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean Courts – (£3,540)</li> <li>• Rob Marshall Bench repair – (£885.34)</li> <li>• Nick Barker – (£3,084)</li> <li>• Mr Steve Spedding Expense claim 26 – (£25)</li> <li>• Mr D Bancroft Expense Claim 27 – (£484.66)</li> </ul>
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**13.6 Expected income before next meeting (8 January 2025)**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forge Donations – (£467.65)</li> <li>• NKDC litter picking grant – (£153.51)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NKDC Rural Prosperity Fund – (£6849)</li> </ul>
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**13.7 Resolved:** That items 13.1 – 13.6 be noted and approved.

**14. To consider and approve the budget for 2024-25 – Responsible Finance Officer**

14.1 The RFO presented a draft budget to the Council and went through each item line by line, answering various questions and providing background information.

**14.2 Resolved:** That the following budget for 2025 – 26 be accepted.

Audit & accounting fees:	£430
Bank charges:	£110
Wages/Salaries:	£10,059
Insurance:	£1040
Grant Awards:	£50
Street lighting (utilities):	£4,200

Allotments:	£0
Parish amenities:	£100
Office and general expenses:	£500
Tree maintenance:	£1450
Repairs to Castle Hill Bridge:	£0
LALC & NALC:	£580
LALC website support	£324
Phone and internet:	£790
General maintenance:	£2,770
Blacksmith shop:	£250
Grass-cutting:	£5,050
Contingency:	£1500
<b>Total Budget:</b>	<b>£29,203</b>

15. To consider the Government Consultation on Enabling Remote Attendance and Proxy Voting at Local Authority Meetings

**15.1 Action Point:** Each member to complete the consultation survey in their own time.

**16. Portfolio Holders Updates**

16.1 Cllr. Bighi reported that the application to the NKDC Rural England Prosperity Fund had been successful. The following items have been ordered and paid for; MUGA sign; New Benches; Bench Refurbishment; Pond Safety Device. The following items remain unpaid and outstanding; MUGA Refurbishment and Repair to Pedestrian Bridge at Castle Hill.

16.1 Cllr Cross reported that The Chair and HR Committee had completed the annual performance reviews for both the Clerk and RFO prior to the meeting.

16.3 Cllr Stark proposed the following recommendation which was seconded by Cllr Bighi:

- 1) That the Parish Council adopt the annual increase to the salary range issued by NALC with an effective date of April 2024.
- 2) That both the Clerk and RFO advance by 1 SCP on the salary scale to LC2 26 resulting in an hourly rate of £18.73 and an annual salary of £4,869.80. Back pay will be due at the previous SCP level of LC2 25 from April 2024 to September 2024 and at the new level of LC2 26 from October.

**16.4 Resolved:** That the above recommendations at 16.3 be accepted.

17. Agenda items for the next meeting: None suggested.

Signed ..... Date.....  
Chair

Meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

**Next meeting:**

Wednesday 8 January 2025

*Future Parish Council Meetings in 2025: All meetings to commence at 7.30 pm*

8 January 12 February 12 March	9 April 14 May 11 June	9 July 10 September 8 October 12 November
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Copies to: Parish Councillors, County &amp; District Councillors, Parish Council Web Site.

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Portfolio 1</b>	<b>Portfolio 2 (&amp; 3)</b>
Robert Cross	Byways/Highways	Cliff Cluster Group Rep
Stephen Short	Planning & Finance Cttee	Human Resources Cttee (& VH Rep)
Harriet Huntsman	Finance Cttee	
Katie Stark	Human Resources Cttee	Communications (& Planning)
Steve Ralph	Drainage	
Michael Bighi	Schools Liaison	Nature and Environment
Steve Spedding	Castle Hill	Community Safety & Resilience
Mark Crosby	Allotments	Village Hall Rep
Louise Troy	Health & Welfare	