

Welbourn Parish Council

MINUTES OF WELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH 2025  
IN THE WELBOURN VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 p.m.

**PRESENT**

<b>Parish Councillors</b> Robert Cross (Chair) Steve Spedding Katie Stark Louise Troy	Mark Crosby Steve Ralph Michael Bighi Harriet Huntsman Stephen Short
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District Councillor Lucille Hagues District Cllr Marianne Overton MBE	Mr Jim Fieldhouse – Parish Clerk
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**Not Present**

Mr Daniel Bancroft – Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)
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1. Chairman's welcome
2. Acceptance of reasons for absence
  - 2.1 Apologies were received from Daniel Bancroft, RFO – (illness). These apologies were accepted.
3. Declaration of interest in any matter on the agenda - None
4. Notes of meeting held on 12 February 2025 to be approved as minutes. Proposed by Cllr Stark and seconded by Cllr Spedding.
  - 4.1 **Resolved:** That these be accepted as minutes of the meeting.
- 5. Parish Clerk's Report**
  - 5.1 The Parish Clerk attended a zoom briefing from Lincolnshire County Council Floods Risk Coordinator following the jetting and cleaning of all culverts in the village. The inspection revealed that the culvert on The Green adjacent the Manor Care Home has collapsed. Lincolnshire County Council state that this is not a registered asset of theirs. However, it has agreed to repair the culvert on a without prejudice basis. Quotations for the repair the work are being organised. In view of this, the action point at 15.1 in the February 2025 minutes has been cancelled. The Floods Risk Coordinator recommends that a major maintenance programme be carried out to the Moat as there is major tree root ingress and the levels problematic.
  - 5.2 **Action Point:** Parish Clerk to convene Welbourn Floods Action Group to address the recommended actions.
  - 5.3 Lincolnshire County Council Highways have issued a traffic notice concerning the road closure of Beck Street between the 19th of March and the 20th of March for carriageway patching.
  - 5.4 The Central Lincolnshire Design Code Consultation runs from the 26th of February 2025 to the 9th of April 2025. Please see the poster on the Welbourn Parish Council noticeboard near the shop for further details.

**6. Public Forum** – Cllr. Bighi reported that a resident had asked whether barley straw could be applied to the village pond (The Beck) to prevent the growth of algae.  
**6.1 Resolved:** Cllrs. Cross, Bighi and Spedding agreed to examine the feasibility of this idea.

## **7. County and District Councillors update**

**7.1** Cllr. Hagues had nothing further to add to her newsletter. *(Available to view on the Parish Council website). (Cllr Hagues left the meeting at 20.30)*

**7.1** Cllr. Overton *(arrived circa 21.00)* stated that a planning application has been submitted seeking permission to develop solar farm and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Coleby. She continues to have concerns about the scale of solar farm development in the Cliff Villages area and is encouraging residents to campaign against these proposals. *(See cvsag.org for more information)*. Apparently, the net zero target for solar farms in the UK has already been met, so further solar farms are not required. The Lincolnshire County Council has submitted an official objection to the proposed Springwell Solar Farm. Cllr. Overton announced that she is standing as an Independent candidate in the upcoming election of the Mayor of the Devolved Greater Lincolnshire Authority. *(Cllr. Overton's March newsletter is on the Parish Council website)*.

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

**8.1** The Parish Clerk requested three quotations for the 2025 Welbourn grass cutting contract . Only two quotes were received, and these were presented to the Council.

**8.2 Resolved:** That the Council accept the lower of the two quotes.

**8.3** The clearing of the brash and trimming of hedges at the village pond has been postponed until Autumn with the agreement of the contractor, as a resident pointed out that the ducks had started nesting.

**8.4** Regarding Welbourn Forge, quotations for repair work to the chimneys, ridge and eaves tiles were presented to the Council.

**8.5 Resolved:** Further clarification on the scope of the repairs and the availability of grant funding is required before choosing a contractor.

## **9. Planning Matters to consider and discuss: None**

## **10. Notifications of Planning Decisions: None**

**11. Finance Report:** - Presented by the Parish Clerk in the absence of the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO): - To review bank balances, invoices paid since last meeting since, and items to be paid before next meeting: -

### **11.1 Accounts value (4 March 2025):**

HSBC Client A/c 611: £4,652.32 (Forge et al) HSBC A/c 772: £4,298.62 (For Precept)	HSBC Bmm A/c 638: £15,343.18 (Reserves) HSBC Business C/A 677: £5,755.11 <b>Bank Total: £30,049.23</b>
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**11.2 Bank reconciled:** £0 discrepancy.

*(N.B. The bank statements were cross checked and signed off by Cllr. Huntsman.)*

### **11.3 Payments made since 12 February 2025**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Expense Claim 29 – (£20.98)</li><li>Clerk Pay – (£324.60)</li><li>RFO Pay – (£395)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bank Charges – (£8.00)</li><li>HMRC PAY/NIC – (£91.37)</li><li>Total Gas &amp; Power – (£14.27)</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BT – (£65.82)</li> </ul>
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#### 11.4 Income received since last meeting:

Zero
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#### 11.5 Expected payments before the next meeting (9 April 2025):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RFO Pay – (£405.60)</li> <li>• Clerk Pay – (£405.60)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BT – (£65.82)</li> <li>• LALC (Webtime) – (£108)</li> </ul>
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#### 11.6 Expected income received before next meeting (9 April 2025)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VAT 126 – (£2,587.28)</li> </ul>
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#### 11.7 Resolved: That the information in 11.1 – 11.6 be noted and approved.

12. To consider the Parish Council's next steps regarding the proposed Leoda Solar Farm and to ratify the Council's feedback on the Non-Statutory Consultation.

12.1 The Parish Council convened a public meeting on 18 February 2025 to give residents the opportunity to air their views on the proposals. Following that meeting the Parish Council agreed to submit the statement in Appendix 1 to the Leoda Non-Statutory Consultation.

**12.3 Resolved:** That the statement in Appendix 1 is ratified by the Parish Council.

12.4 A campaign group (independent of the Council) opposing the plans has been formed by residents from the villages affected by the proposals. For further information visit: <https://leodasolaraction.co.uk/> or email: [LeodaSolarAction@gmail.com](mailto:LeodaSolarAction@gmail.com)

13. To approve updated Financial Regulations for the Parish Council.

13.1 The Parish Clerk advised that the current Financial Regulations were out of date. An updated version based on the National Association of Local Councils 2024 Model Financial Regulations was presented to the Council for approval.

**13.2 Resolved:** That the updated version be adopted immediately.

14. To consider and decide the next steps regarding the tennis court refurbishment.

**14.1 Resolved:** That the RFO apply to the High Sheriff Fund via Lincolnshire Community Foundation for a grant to fund the works.

15. To consider and decide on appropriate arrangements for VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 8 May 2025.

**15.1 Resolved:** With assistance from the Village Hall and Playing Field Committee, to join in with the coffee morning scheduled for Saturday 10 May 2025.

#### 15. Portfolio Holders Updates

**15.1** Cllr. Bighi requested that the Parish Clerk contact the Taylor Lindsey Developments to enquire about the possibility of repairing the collapsed boundary wall on Cow Lane.

**15.2** Cllr. Cross requested that the Parish Clerk contact NKDC to ask if it has copies of the text on information boards at Castle Hill.

**15.3 Action Point:** Parish Clerk to action these issues.

**16. Agenda items;** None

Signed ..... Date.....

Chair

(Meeting closed at 9.15 pm.)

**Next meeting:**

Wednesday 9 April 2025

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

9 April 14 May 11 June	9 July 10 September	8 October 12 November
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Copies to: Parish Councillors, County & 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	

## **Appendix 1**

### **Feedback Statement from Welbourn Parish Council Regarding the Proposed Leoda Solar Farm**

Welbourn Parish Council called a public meeting which was held on 18 February 2025 in response to the announcement that it is proposed to build the Leoda Solar Farm on land very close to the curtilages of Welbourn and Leadenham in Lincolnshire.

The meeting was well attended with 80 plus people there. Picking up on the views expressed by residents of the two villages concerning the proposed development, the Parish Council wish to provide the following feedback on the proposal:

- The development covers too large an area.
- It will have a detrimental visual impact.
- There are proposals to develop two other large scale solar farms within a 10-mile radius of Welbourn and Leadenham. Should all the

proposals proceed, the accumulative effect of 9100 acres of solar farms on the landscape would be devastating.

- The plans involve constructing solar panels very close to existing residential premises. (The World Health Organisation recommends Solar Farms are not built within 2miles/3km of residential properties and areas.)
- There will be a significant loss in agricultural land for food production.
- The solar panels are not recyclable and are outdated.
- There is concern that the solar panels are produced by Chinese slave labour.
- The battery energy storage systems have been known to catch fire spontaneously and proved difficult to extinguish.
- The planned proposal will see a solar farm and battery storage area built on the approach path to RAF Waddington. The daily glint of the panels will provide distraction to pilots, especially members of the Red Arrows who perform display routines overhead.
- Residents will be unable to enjoy a normal countryside walk and will therefore suffer a loss of amenity.
- The area is home to roe and muntjac deer, fox, badgers, multiple birds of prey (buzzard, red kite, owl, hawk), other rare birds such as skylark, all of which will be severely impacted by the proposal.
- Leoda plans to utilise Dycote Lane as a possible access route to the proposed area. This would involve circa 120 x HGVs a day operating up and down the lane which is a single carriageway. Dycote Lane does not have the capacity to support this activity.
- There are alternative solutions available to meeting the net zero targets.
- There are serious concerns that if the development goes ahead, the companies responsible for dismantling the farm would not honour their commitments 40-60 years from now.
- There are no discernible benefits to the local community.

Signed

Welbourn Parish Council