

KEMBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Kemberton Parish Council
held on Wednesday 8th March 2023 at Kemberton Village Hall

In attendance: Cllrs Angela Blount, Phil Jones, Mark Lea, James Rennison and Mary Wright. Shropshire Councillor Richard Marshall, ten members of the public, and the Parish Clerk (Vanessa Voysey).

22.98 Chairman's Welcome and Announcements

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

22.99 Apologies

Apologies from Cllr Giles Greenwood were accepted (annual leave)

22.100 Casual Vacancy

There were no expressions of interest in the casual vacancy at this time

22.101 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no pecuniary interests to record

22.102 Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation

22.103 Report from Shropshire Councillor

Richard Marshall, Shropshire Councillor for Worfield, said that he did not have a report as such, but would be commenting on the upcoming South Planning Committee due to take place on Tuesday 14th March. He said he was disappointed that officers had recommended approval for the solar farm in Kemberton, but noted that officers had to make their comments in line with the national policy framework. The fact that none of us want it has no bearing in planning law. If the plan were not passed it could go to appeal, but if it were passed the only option available would be judicial review and this would cost tens of thousands of pounds.

He advised the Chairman to send a polite email to all members of the South Planning Committee prior to the meeting, not contradicting planning officers regarding planning law but including main arguments against the plans. Cllr Marshall highlighted two main areas of argument against:

- Harm to the Local Economy – the solar farm would be a loss to a local farmer. It is notable that this is an organic farm.
- Green Belt special circumstances - special circumstances are required to build on the Green Belt, renewable energy would qualify as this but it is notable that there is a brown field site very near that is earmarked for commercial use. It would be more expensive.

Cllr Marshall said that his summing up would be to question if maximising the profits of energy companies would be special circumstances for building on the Green Belt.

He concluded by saying that there is a mountain to climb. If the Committee does reject the plan, of which he is about 65% certain, the chances of the planning inspectorate upholding such a decision at appeal he suggests would be more likely around 40%.

The Chairman, Cllr Phil Jones, thanked Cllr Marshall for his support.

22.104 Public Participation Session

There were ten members of the public present and comments were made about the solar farm plans including:

- The farmer is a tenant farmer, this could go against the economic argument as tenancies can be removed
- The system is weighted against residents
- Residents did not have time to respond to the comments made by the company pitching the plans
- Questioning of the potential of a health risk to residents of having solar panels so close to the village
- Questioning the section of the plans that refers to putting the land back to agricultural use in 40 years.
- Beckbury recently had an application refused on the grounds of visual impact before the planning stage

A member of the public asked about the site visit due to take place before the Committee meeting. Cllr Richard Marshall advised that a Parish Council representative taking place could only speak through the Chair as the site visit acted as part of the committee process.

It was noted that residents would need to register to attend the committee meeting. Transport arrangements were being put in place, and the Chairman, Cllr Phil Jones, said that he would contact interested parties with details about registering attendance. A member of the public said that the more people who attended the better, it was questioned how many people could speak. Cllr Richard Marshall said that he would find out this information.

Cllr James Rennison noted that the Parish Plan had indicated that residents did not think renewable energy sites were suitable for Kemberton. Cllr Richard Marshall requested that the Parish Clerk find out who the plan was lodged with at Shropshire Council and if it was formally adopted.

Simon Crothall, as part of the Solar Panel Working Party, had spoken with the solicitor advising the Parish Council. He had looked at the brief again (at no cost) and advised that the options available for further assistance for the Parish Council to consider were either the preparation of a paper to be read at the Committee that condensed documentation, or for him to attend in person. The costing for the paper would be approximately £700 to £1000, whilst attending in person would be £1,500 (excluding VAT).

The Chairman, Cllr Phil Jones, thanked Simon Crothall for all his diligent research and time spent on the Solar Farm.

22.105 Minutes

It was proposed, seconded and resolved to approve the minutes dated 11th January 2023

22.106 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

22.107 Planning Applications Received

23/00674/LBC (validated: 17/02/2023)

5 Hall Lane, Kemberton: Formation of new vehicular access including new access gate and vehicular hardstanding area

No objection

23/00336/FUL (validated 01/02/2023)

Hilton, Mill Lane, Kemberton: Erection of two storey rear extension following demolition of existing double garage, utility, lobby and pantry

No objection

22/00826/FUL

Church Farm, Hall Lane, Kemberton: Erection of a detached carport, alterations to access and installation of a new gate

No objection

22.108 Planning Application Decisions:

There were none at this time

22.109 Another Planning Matters:

There were no planning notifications received after the publication of the agenda

Consideration was given to the options presented by the Solar Panel Working Party as regards legal representation options for the South Planning Committee due to be held at Shire Hall on Tuesday March 14th 2023.

It was proposed, seconded, and **resolved**, to request that the Parish Council's legal representative attend the session on its behalf at an anticipated cost of £1,500.

22.110 Correspondence

West Mercia Police – Correspondence has been received regarding the Local Policing Community Charter. It was agreed to retain the existing three priority options: road traffic collisions, speeding, and wildlife crime.

22.111 Finance

i) Payments

It was proposed, seconded, and resolved to approve the following

	Payee	Description	Amount	Power
BACS	Clerk	Travel Expenses (March)	£13.50	LGA 1972 s.112 (2)
BACS	Clerk	Village Hall Hire	£120 - tbc	LGA 1972 s.111

ii) Income

The following was noted:

Bank interest - 6.48p for months of December, January and February

iii) Bank Reconciliation

It was proposed, seconded and resolved to receive and accept the Bank Reconciliation to month end January 2023

iv) Spend to Date

It was proposed, seconded and resolved to receive and accept the Spend to Date for month end January 2023

v) Parish Clerk's Salary

It was proposed, seconded and resolved to pay the Parish Clerk £1,650 salary for the financial year 2023-2024

22.112 Environment

- i) Cllr Mark Lea reported that he had spoken and met with a landowner about flooding and drainage issues on Field Lane. The landowner had contacted the Parish Clerk after a letter was sent on behalf of the Parish Council following January's meeting.
- ii) Discussion on environmental maintenance needs in the Parish as raised in the meeting of 11th January was deferred.

22.113 Highways

Cllr Mark Lea said that the situation with speeding was getting worse and that it was not just one driver responsible. He will continue to follow up the Quiet Lanes strategy with CPRE,

22.114 Other Parish Matters

Cllr Angela Blount raised her concern regarding the overspill of water from the cellar pipe at Hall Cottage and the lack of resolution on this issue. It had recently resulted in frozen water all over the pavement.

22.115 Next Meeting will be Wednesday 10th May 2023 at Kemberton Village Hall, 7.30pm