

Boyton Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 18 May 2015 at 7.30pm in the Parish Church Hall

Present: Councillors: Jon Bennett, Graham Clarke, Mervyn Law(Chairman), Jenny Smith, Martin Stanbury, Bernard Strout, Ray Willis and Clerk, David Scott. Seventeen members of the public attended.

1. Apologies: Councillor Trisha Melzer (on holiday).

2. Chairman's Comments:

A letter announcing the retirement of the clerk in May 2016 was read.

3. Questions from the public on Agenda Items only (Standing Orders in abeyance)-None.

4. Representatives from Lightsource Energy Ltd.(Colm Ryan Planner, Kate Shaw, Senior Development Manager) and 'Mongooseenergy' representative (Chris Crookall-Fallon) were introduced and presented their planning application at West Ditchin- a modified version of that recently refused by Cornwall Council-and how community solar farms/community benefit schemes (CBS's) worked. Questions were taken from the audience who were keen to clarify CBSs regarding set up and organisation. Basically the Community (and by 'community' this did not mean exclusively Boyton but could be a number of parishes) had to establish a Community Energy Company and then determine appropriate funding structure with support and advice from the community energy organisation. These elements could be in place before planning permission had been granted. There would then be a Buy-In when the Community Energy Company purchased the solar farm from Lightsource pre-construction. Lightsource would then construct the site and take on long term operation and maintenance. Meanwhile the Community Energy Company would distribute community benefit and returns to investors. It was emphasised that the mechanism for community energy projects of this scale was very new and finer details were still being worked through.

5. Written Declarations of Pecuniary Interests(DPI's) (Standing Orders in force)-None.

6. Disclosures of Interest: None.

7. Planning

Application 1: PA15/03083 Installation of a solar farm and associated infrastructure, including photovoltaic panels, mounting frames, inverters, transformers, sub stations, communications building, fence and pole mounted security cameras, for the life of the solar farm on Land at Hornacott West Ditchin North Tamerton for Lightsource Renewable Energy Ltd.

Several letters of objection from parishioners had been received or registered on Cornwall Council's online planning register.

Members took account of these letters, the Case Officers initial comments, those of the County Landscape Officer, and application documents in deciding the comments below:

- i) Following a majority vote, BPC endorsed the comments of the Land scape Officer.
- ii) Several letters by Boyton residents expressed concern over the visual and landscape impact.
- iii) Effect on surrounding buildings and environment-there will be an adverse effect on those properties abounding the Hornacott Cross to Westscott Cross road.
- iv) Noted that Consultee Natural England had 'no objection' but Government planning guidance-comments: (a) Noted land is Grade 3b and 4 but it borders land of great landscape value. (b) Noted also National Planning Framework includes strong protection for natural and historic (see comment on set finding) environment. Many in this community have genuine concern that when it comes to development such as solar farms, insufficient weight may be given to local

- v) environmental considerations like landscape, heritage and local amenity. We emphasise that new guidance makes it clear that the need for renewable energy does not automatically
 - vi) override environmental protections-the views of local communities should be listened to and acted upon.
 - v) Highway Safety and traffic levels-(a) During construction traffic should be controlled to avoid traffic associated with the school i.e. between 8-9.30am and 3-4.30pm weekdays. Robust instructions should be in place to ensure roads are left in a state in which they were found and fully cleaned off within one month of the completion of construction work. Additionally the developer should ensure that any structural damage or debris is repaired/cleaned up during the construction phase.
 - vi) Adequacy of local services-no comment.
 - vii) Particular features existing on site that should be retained-no comment.
 - viii) Any other adverse impact on the amenity of the local residents-no comment.
 - ix) Suggestions to improve the proposed development-Effect on level of daylight and privacy of existing property-many in the community are concerned about this.
 - xii) Planning history-PA14/08270 was refused recently.
- As proposed by Councillor Bennett and seconded by Councillor Clarke and on a vote of 4 in favour and none against it was, **Resolved** that the above comments be forwarded to Cornwall Council.

Application 2: PA15/ 02488 Erection of steel framed building of Length 18.46m x width 12.3m. Height to eaves 4.61m 20 ft stations and bracing. Gates to both ends 3.69m x 3.69m. Existing access from road and proposed building is 20m from the road. No change of use as it is used for grazing of sheep, cattle and horses for Mrs Sarah Harvey.

- i) General Views-the proposed development is outside the Development Boundary and within an Area of Great Landscape Value(AGLV).
- ii) Beneficial/adverse impacts on local community-none.
- iii) Effects on surrounding buildings-none.
- iv) Acceptable design-acceptable.
- v) Site access and parking-existing facilities are adequate.
- vi) Highways-Adequate.
- vii) Local Services-not relevant.
- ix) Features on site which should be retained-none.
- x) Suggestions to improve the application-none.
- xi) Previous history of the site-none known.

As proposed by Councillor Strout and seconded by Councillor Bennett and on a vote of 4 in favour and none against it was, **Resolved** that the above comments be forwarded to Cornwall Council.

As proposed by Councillor Strout and seconded by Councillor Smith and on a vote of 4 in favour and none against it was, **Resolved** that this council supports the application.

8. Minutes of Meeting and Report of Annual Meeting:

- *As proposed by Councillor Clarke, seconded by Councillor Stanbury and on a vote of 4 in favour and none against it was, **Resolved** that the Minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting.
- * As proposed by Councillor Bennett, seconded by Councillor Smith it was **Resolved** that the Report be recommended for acceptance at the next Annual Meeting in 2016.

9. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman:

- * By a majority of 4-3 votes, Councillor Martin Stanbury was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council for the year ensuing. Councillor Stanbury assumed the chair and paid tribute to his predecessor Councillor Law for seeing the council through the past 3 years-his firm but fair leadership was greatly appreciated.
- * Election of Vice Chairman-By a majority of 4-3 votes, Councillor Law was elected as Vice Chairman of the Parish Council for the year ensuing.

10. Matters arising and Clerk's Report: None.

11. Finance:

- * Members were advised of the changes in Financial Regulations that affected the Council. Standing Orders would be amended to reflect the changes.
- * Annual Governance Statement: Councillors were issued with a full copy of the Current/Reserve Accounts/ Assets covering F/Y 2014-15 and advised that Internal Auditor Nigel Hooper had completed his work and had no comments. Members therefore went on to complete the Annual Governance Statement and as proposed by Councillor Law and seconded by Councillor Strout and on a vote of 4 in favour and none against it was, **Resolved** that the Chairman, Clerk (as Clerk) and RFO sign the Statement.

12. New Correspondence:

- * Request to address the Parish Council by MI Grid-by a majority decision this company were to be invited to the Council's next routine meeting. A 10 minute presentation without prejudice and subject to questions from councillors and public at the start of the meeting would be programmed in.
- * Rural Highway Inspection and Maintenance-Restrictions in budget had led to inspections of the rural road network being reduced to once per year-safety led inspections would continue on a six monthly basis: Highways were keen to hear from local councils who would be willing to consider undertaking as partners, maintenance works to the margins of the highway corridor(gullies, verges and signage etc.) More information was to be requested and a visit from the Community Link Officer or his representative.

13. Risk Assessments-Insurance:

As proposed by Councillor Law, seconded by Councillor Bennett and on a vote of 4 in favour and none against it was, **Resolved** that the Insurance Quote of £195.04 (inclusive of Insurance Premium Tax) from 'Zurich' be accepted and that the 3 year deal at the same price per annum also be accepted.

14. Website Renewal:

As proposed by Councillor Strout, seconded by Councillor Law and on a vote of 4 in favour and none against it was, **Resolved** that Messers Hugo Fox be invited to attend an informal meeting of councillors and parishioners on a date to be confirmed.

15. Members' Questions:

The Chairman stated he was conscious of the confidence members had placed in him and assured them he would give equal and fair opportunity to all on the issues during his term of office. He had business links both within and without the community and where these, in any way, conflicted with council business he would bring in the vice chairman. He thanked outgoing Vice Chairman Councillor Jenny Smith for her 2 years work in the role in attending and speaking at Cornwall Council Strategic Committee Planning Meetings.

*Community Solar Farm and Wind Turbine benefit-no applications had been received of late and all were encouraged to apply-noted the Computer Club were to apply. 8 June 2016 was the next meeting date. CCF had confirmed they would invoice the Developers to collect benefit money which would be sent direct to CCF with the exception of the next payment (including an index linked amount) from 'Bluebell Investments' (formally 'Solar North Beer') which was to be sent to the Parish Council's account.

* An agenda item to cover councillors' responsibilities re-pre planning application visits would be raised next meeting.

* St Austell Library Consultation-Councillor Clarke had attended among 30 others. The Library/One Stop Shop budget had to be reduced from £4 to £1.8m over 4 years. No mention of reduced hours or cuts but aim was to preserve the statutory obligations and maintain services 'free at the point of

access'. Two options emerged: 'A'-Community services to be run by Town or Parish Councils and 'B'-Take on as a business venture by interested organisations such as Virgin or BT among others.

16. Public Participation:

- * With reference to PA15/03083-Council were urged to be pro-active regarding community solar projects if Boyton was to get maximum benefit. Early contact with North Tamerton was recommended as was the setting of the threshold for investment-the aim being 'not to be beaten to it'.
- * Councillors' responsibilities: would be subsumed under Members' Questions bullet point 2.
- * A check was to be made regarding whether planning conditions forbade the trimming of hedges (which had been reported as trimmed) around the solar farms at North Beer and The Grange and if so to bring it to the attention of the Enforcement Authority.

17. Date of next Meeting: 22 June 2015

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.55pm

Signed.....Chairman.....Date

