

Minutes of Stocking Pelham Parish Council Meeting held on 22 July 2021 Village Hall at 6.30pm

Present: Cllrs Louise Balaam, Colin Berthoud, Daniel Horn, Michael Hutchins (Chairman) and Paul Lucas

In attendance: Mrs R Berthoud, Parish Clerk, Dist Cllr G Williamson and two members of the public

21/40

Apologies

To receive and accept apologies for absence
None

21/41

Interests

- a) To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda
Cllr Berthoud, item 22/44f2.
- b) To receive written requests for dispensations for declarable interests; and
- c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate

21/42

Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of Stocking Pelham Parish Council Meeting held on 6 May 2021 as an accurate record of the proceedings.

Resolved that the minutes be agreed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed by the Chairman. Unanimously agreed.

21/43

Public Issues

Members of the public can raise matters of concern. (This item is limited to 15 minutes)

Jo van Riemsdijk of the Protect the Pelhams campaign group updated the parish council on progress regarding BESS and Solar Farm proposals in Stocking Pelham and the surrounding area. She has invited East Herts Fire and Rescue Service to a meeting to discuss the danger of BESS located close to residential areas. The Fire service were not aware of the Berden BESS. This was a surprise. Catastrophic fires requiring enormous amounts of water at high pressure have occurred worldwide at battery storage facilities. Jo has made a FOI request with Affinity Water to find out whether the water pressure at the Berden BESS site is sufficient in the event of a fire. Poisonous gases, including hydrogen fluoride, develop when lithium-ion batteries burn. These gases could spread as far as Stansted or Cambridge. It would appear that Uttlesford District Council (UDC) has not carried out a risk assessment of the Berden BESS, which could be considered negligent. Protect the Pelhams aims to galvanise support, provide factual evidence and ensure people know how to object. Dist Cllr Williamson thought the affected parish councils and campaign groups should co-ordinate their efforts. It is possible that the

Berden BESS does not comply with planning conditions as no acoustic fencing has been erected nor any bunds of sufficient height to mitigate noise nuisance. The planting around the site consists of some twigs. Cllr Horn has taken noise level recordings, which were well above agreed limits.

21/44

Updates from Councillors

a) Chairman's update – Cllr Hutchins

A working party has been formed to discuss issues pertaining to battery storage and solar fields.

Land that was for sale in Furneux Pelham has been bought by a group of residents from FP and surrounding villages and will be gifted to FPPC.

b) Village Hall – Cllr Hutchins

The Village Hall will not be available for rent at present due to Covid, though will continue to be available to the pre-school on return. The Hall has been deep cleaned.

c) Playground – Cllr Balaam

The installation has been finished and the playground is a great success. Weekly safety checks will be carried out by Cllr Hutchins and Balaam and an annual professional safety check will be needed. A children's obstacle course is planned for the nature trail. The rabbit fence around the recreation ground has been mended and extended and a new gate has been installed.

The Chairman will apply for the grant funds to be released once payment for the last invoice has been remitted.

d) Footpaths and Common Land – Cllr Lucas

1. Sewage at the ditch to the rear of the recreation ground

This ditch smells bad and does not flow properly. **The Chairman** will contact Clarion to discuss how best to remedy the situation. This is becoming an environmental health issue. **Dist Cllr Williamson** will consult colleagues in the environmental health department.

2. Fence blocking footpath in Hitchcocks' grass field still in place

This fence now has a stile, but a gate is needed to allow access for all.

The Chairman will talk to the Hitchcocks.

e) Highways – Cllr Horn

1. Overgrown hedge blocking the highway at Bennils causing a danger to walkers and traffic.

The Chairman and Clerk will notify the owner.

2. Speed road safety cameras – reporting via Hertfordshire Constabulary (capture.rantandrive.com)

Cllr Horn has requested a meeting with County Cllr G McAndrew and Dist Cllr G Williamson to discuss the possibility of having a speed monitor deployed at either end of the village where speeding occurs.

f) Planning – Cllr Lucas

1. Update on current applications

The Oaks site still has light industrial activity going on although they are licensed for storage (B8). **Dist Cllr Williamson** will investigate.

3/21/0969/FUL Land ad Greens Farm, East End SG9 OJU, Construction of a 50MW Battery Energy Storage System facility

This item was discussed and agreed by all councillors on email but not previously minuted.

Proposed Cllr Berthoud, seconded Cllr Balaam to oppose this application and send a joint letter of opposition with the parish councils of Berden, Manuden and Furneux Pelham. Unanimously agreed.

2. New applications

3/21/1580/VAR, Waterlilies SG9 OJA, variation of condition 2 of 3/19/2005/FUL, adjustments to window sizes and overall footprint

No comment

3. To agree the parish council's response to battery storage facilities
Prior to planning applications being submitted the parish council will carry out fact finding and engage with the CPRE and other organisations to gather information. Cllrs Lucas and Berthoud met with Herts CPRE on 15 July 2021 to discuss battery and solar panel issues.

4. To agree the parish council's response to solar panel fields
Fact finding and engagement with relevant organisations prior to planning application having been submitted.

5. Councillors attended a "Protect the Pelhams" Solar factory/Battery Storage meeting at the Furneux Pelham Church on the 19/7 – a copy of the Presentation is held on file by the clerk.

g) The Cock Inn – Cllr Berthoud

The recent valuation of the property was higher than expected and M Hutchins and C Berthoud are not willing to purchase without additional interest from members of the Stocking Pelham Community Action Group at this level. More investors will be sought.

21/45

Finance

01 April – 31 May 2021

Payments

41.00	Website costs
3,154.14	Sovereign Playground
186.83	Save the Cock signs
98.68	HAPTC annual membership

Receipts

1,500.00	Precept (50%)
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Bank balance 3,985.47

21/46

Clerk's notices None

21/47

Next Meeting

To agree date and suggest agenda items for the next Meeting of the Parish Council

Thursday 26 August at 6.30pm.

Meeting closed at 8.05pm