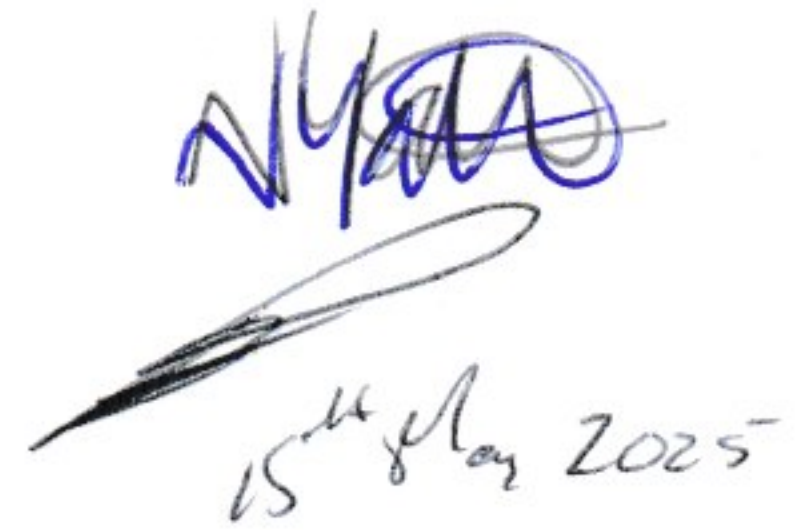


**Great Staughton Parish Council
Minutes of
Meeting on Thursday, 20 March 2025
Village Pavilion**


15th of May 2025

Present:

R Jewell (BJ)

N Yates (NY)

J Duberly (JD)

H Glanville (HG)

L Goody (LG)

H Hopperton (HH)

G Brittain (GB)

Also in attendance:

Jo Russel – clerk

Stephen Cawley - District Councillor

Tracey Stokes – Stop East Park Energy

A resident from GSN regarding planning application 25/00225/FUL

1. Apologies for absence – Will Mumford (WM), David Moore (DM)

2. Residents' Forum

TS wanted to address the PC regarding the proposed solar park. The group have a number of concerns namely:

- Size of the development is larger than Gatwick Airport
- No meaningful screening of the solar panels
- It will take 3 or 4 years to build
- A large number of traffic movements
- Structural risk to buildings
- Effect on schools and businesses
- Closure of footpaths
- Vistas not maintained
- Concerns about battery fires

A planning application is due to be made between July and September 2025. TS is encouraging the PC to register as an Interested Party. TS will be asking HDC and CCC to object. She also asked if the PC would consider contributing £1000 for soil surveys. The best argument to stop this solar park is to look at the soil quality, which is good, and this is good argument for the solar park being refused.

A representative of GSN then spoke about planning application 25/00225/FUL. There was some concerns about large vehicles being able to access the site but GSN confirmed that they do not have any lorries but Highways had requested that large vehicles be able to access the site. Highways now want a traffic survey. There are some documents on the planning portal but these are not complete. Neither neighbour has objected. Another house has objected but this is not being considered by HDC as it is too far away.

3. Declarations of Interest

JD - item 14 re Brook Farm

HH – item 17

4. Reports from District Councillor – see attached report of Stephen Cawley.

5. Approve minutes of 7 November 2024 and 9 January 2025 – these were agreed and signed by the Chair as a true record of the meetings.

6. Matters Arising:

- **Footpath 40 – Staughton Moor** – HH confirmed that this had now been cut back. HH will review the position in 3 months. Remove from agenda.
- **Blocked Drains – The Green/The Highway-** issue resolved. Remove from agenda.
- **Police checks re 20mph speed limit** – an email has been sent to the police requesting mobile speed cameras to enforce the 20pmh speed limit.

7. Attendance at other meetings

LG will be attending the meeting on 24 March with the MP. Suggested issues:

- Local Government Reorganisation
- New housing targets for the District
- Solar Farm
- Support for rural communities
- New doctors surgery.

BJ attended a meeting about the proposed unitary authorities. It is recommended for reasons of viability that a UA should have approximately 500K people. This will mean that the combined area of Peterborough and Cambridgeshire is likely to be divided into 2 or 3 units. The new UA will have all the responsibilities of both District and County Councils and HDC and CCC will cease to exist in 2028. The mayoral function will remain and have additional strategic planning responsibilities. The functions of Parish Councils will remain unchanged.

BJ also attended a meeting on new housing targets and the Local Plan. The new targets for housing require HDC to provide planning for more dwellings than currently proposed. This will be addressed by HDC planning officers but in the meantime, there is a 'tilted balance' environment allowing more development than would otherwise be allowed. However, it should be noted where a Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' then that tilted balance may not apply.

8. Roman Site Community Event – this will be held on 27 March at 6pm.

9. Net Zero Projects – BJ confirmed that the cost of constructing a cycle way to Hail Weston is prohibitively expensive and as a result has withdrawn from the application process.

10. Highways

- **LHi Bid 24/25** – no update
- **Possible LHi Bid 25/26** – no update
- **Blocked Highway in Perry - WM** - c/f
- **Drain defect Cage Lane** -
- **Cycle race issues – WM** – c/f
- **Drain - The Town** - the residents have had a letter. If the first house acts as requested then this should resolve the issues. BJ reported that the ditches outside 67 and 69 The Green are also blocked. He has spoken to one homeowner and has contacted Highways to see who is responsible.

11. Planning:

- **Five Acres Enforcement issues**

- **Wyboston Garden Village/developments in Beds near A1 – ongoing**
- **22/01813/FUL Land East and West of Little Staughton Solar Farm – comments submitted re Rights of Way**
- **25/00232/LBC Single storey rear extension Land at Garden Farm** - no objections. The owners are saving the barn and improving the area.
- **25/00231/HHFUL Single storey rear extension Land at Garden Farm – see above.**
- **25/00230/LBC Demolition of out building and conversion of barn and air source heat pumps The Barn, Garden Farm** - see above.
- **25/00225/FUL GSN Conservatories – showroom extension–** some concerns were raised about the considerable expansion of the site and about a potential increase in traffic particularly HGVs. Others felt that it was a small local business and that it was important to support local businesses and employment opportunities. The neighbours did not appear to be objecting. The PC had no objections.

- 12. Finance/Cashbook** – review payments in and out. Payments were approved. Approve CAPALC membership fee for 25/26 – this was agreed.

13. Correspondence

Email received from resident regarding Village Hall car park and heating system – the village hall will look into resurfacing the car park and look at signage, possibly on the bus shelter. Email received from resident regarding planning issue at 14 The Highway - a resident had reported this to the Chair and he asked the clerk to report this to HDC. Enforcement are now investigating. The issue is whether planning permission should have been applied for as the building is listed.

14. Neighbourhood Plan – BJ

HDC completed their consultation on 5 February and it has now been passed to the Independent Examiner. He has raised 27 questions. HDC will then take the Plan to Cabinet on 17 June. There will then be a village referendum.

15. Reports from:

- Village Hall committee - HG reported that the hall will be replacing the oil boiler with an air source heat pump in April.
- Playing Field committee - NY reported that they are looking for batteries for the solar panels to try to reduce the very high electricity bills. This will cost in the region of £4k.
- Speed watch - no report.

16. Parish Matters

NY reported that regrettably Life Magazine will close in the Autumn. No one has come forward to replace Rob unfortunately.

BJ reported that a fence panel had been damaged at Jewell Close and People for Places will not accept responsibility. Investigations are currently underway to ascertain who is responsible for this boundary. BJ also reported that he would be resigning as chair at the May meeting.

17. East Park Energy Solar Farm

Regarding the request for the PC to contribute £1000 towards independent surveys for Stop East Park Energy it was thought that it the PC did not have the relevant power to

do this. The PC has never given money to pressure groups and questioned whether tax payers money should/could be used for this purpose. In any event the request for a financial contribution was thought to be premature as the PC did not have all of the relevant information to make a decision.

18. Meeting dates for 2025

17 April – Parish Assembly

15 May - AGM

3 July

18 September

13 November

Meeting closed 21.34

Parish Council Update – March 2025

Garden Waste Subscription 2025

Subscriptions for Garden Waste Collection Service are now open for the upcoming service year, which will run from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. The cost per year is £57.50 for one garden waste bin and £30 per additional bin (up to a maximum of 3 additional bins).

To ensure your garden waste collections continue seamlessly from 1 April 2025, residents are encouraged to renew their subscription as soon as possible.

New subscribers: If you have not used the garden waste service before, you can sign up for the service for the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, using the Garden Waste Subscription Form (online)

Returning subscribers (card payments): If you subscribed last year (2024- 2025) using a card payment, you will need to renew your subscription for 2025-2026, using the Garden Waste Subscription Form (online)

Returning subscribers (Direct Debit): If you signed up last year via Direct Debit, this would automatically renew each year. You do not need to sign up again.

Budget 2025/2026

At last Full Council meeting, the budget for next year accepted (opposed by Conservatives who proposed amendments to make savings – rejected)

Council Tax increased by maximum amount without recourse to local referendum

Economic Growth Strategy Refresh

HDC has commissioned PRD and Volterra (consultants) to undertake a refresh of the Council's Economic Growth Strategy. Members of the consultant team will be joining a member workshop on 11th March to explain how the refresh will be undertaken and the key factors that will influence future economic growth.

Devolution White Paper

Peterborough City Council is included. Constituent councils include all Districts, Unitary and the County. Other public sector colleagues (Health, Police and Fire) are included in discussions.

We are in Wave 2 and must have final plan submitted by the autumn, although initial plans need to be ready by March.

CCC elections and Mayoral elections will go ahead in 2025. HDC elections in 2026 – unknown at this stage.

The process continues with an extraordinary Full Council meeting on 19 March to consider HDC's response and proposal to be submitted by 21 March.

Tilted Balance

Because Central Government has upped housing targets across England, for the first time HDC finds its development pipeline below the 5 years land target and is in tilted balance. This means there could be a presumption in favour of sustainable development on any proposal brought forward. Local / Neighbourhood / Village Plans however still have an influence.