

# **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**

**held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 1st April 2025**

**Those Present:** Councillors T Wright (Chair), M Turner, T Benthams, S Knight, R Bedwell, M Soar, C Tym, and K Beedham

**In Attendance:** Cllr O Bierley, Cllr A Lawrence and 6 members of the public

## **To receive apologies and reasons for absence**

Councillors E Darwood, R Dannatt,

### **1. Welcome and Chairman's report**

The minutes from the previous Parish Meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 require a correction. In the previous minutes the chair stated that a defibrillator had been purchased which was incorrect. With this amendment it was resolved that they were a true record of the meeting.

#### Chairmans Report

I'm delighted to welcome everyone to the annual meeting of the Keelby Parish Council; I am particularly pleased to welcome representative from Island Green Power to give an update on the Grange Energy Park solar project.

On reflection of the last year, we appear to have had a quiet but effective year, and I'm delighted that agendas have not been dominated by discussions about the sport ground this time around. I'm very pleased with the positive reaction to our social media presence, and I truly believe that parishioners appreciate our more open and transparent approach to communicating the business we do on their behalf. Our general updates have also been well-received.

It was great to see the Keelby Gala back last year, and it was wonderful to formally open the new play area and cycle track at that event. There is no doubt that these new recreational facilities are appreciated and very well used, and there is nothing better than to see the village green full of families enjoying life. I would like to see the adult gym equipment used a little more, especially as this was installed specifically in response to many requests from villagers, but I'm sure this will happen in due course.

We installed new village signs this year to brighten up the entrances to the village and we have started a project to install new seating around the village green as this has been requested by a number of residents; work on this will continue in the coming year.

With regards to our standing in West Lindsey, I'm delighted to reflect that the development and publication of our Neighbourhood Plan has served us well and has helped us influence planners with regards to developments that would not enhance our village; similarly it was nice to see the plan help us overturn a planning decision that wasn't in the interest of a local business that we were in support of.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a few thank yous, starting with our County and District Councillors. Councillor Tom Smith as County Councillor has been a great advocate for the village and can always be relied upon to support us. Similarly, we have enjoyed great support and guidance from our District Councillors Angela Lawrence and Owen Bierley; it's fair to say, we are better off with these people in our corner.

Over the year, we have seen some changes around the table, with Parish Councillors Pat Wilks, Graham Lovatt and Mike Wright standing down, and being replaced by Councillors Karen Beedham and Michelle Soar, which of course leaves us with one vacancy. I would like to thank Councillors Wilks, Lovatt and Wright for their contributions over their tenure.

We of course welcomed to the team a new Handyman, Peter Mills, who has settled in well and is doing a great job.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all current Councillors for their hard work and diligence. And, of course, I have to thank our wonderful Clerk, Janet Milson for her tremendous work and organisation that has kept the Council in check and ensured we meet our statutory responsibilities, she has been excellent and deserves great credit.

## **2. Presentation by Grange Energy Park**

Paul Taylor and Donna Clark introduced the project which was first introduced in March 2024 at an exhibition at Stallingborough Grange. A second design has been completed following residents comments from the first meeting.

Donna, the project manager distributed the final drawings that will go to planning. The revised plan now means that part of the project falls within the Keelby Parish. The total site area is 140 hectares and 32 hectares are within Keelby. The solar generation is 16 hectares. There is a belt of woodland and within the centre of the site is a community woodland. There are also plans to have a permissive footpath to link up with the public footpaths that are there at present. This will create a circular footpath. The plan is to introduce lots of greenery and woodland and reinforce hedgerows to screen the development, for environmental reasons and to enhance the views within the landscape. There is a mitigation pond which will also be an environmental feature. The energy storage area also includes a sub-station.

The delay is due to partly due to the redesign of parts of the project due to feedback from residents as well as statutory consultees. The planning applications can now be submitted as the screening request to West Lindsey and North East Lincolnshire to check that the development wasn't considered to be an environmental impact assessment development have come back confirming that it isn't. The size of the scheme is 49.9mw of solar generation and 500mw of energy storage. The website gives all the information and residents were encouraged to comment on the scheme. The contact details are on the website if the public wanted to get in touch.

Cllr T Wright asked about lead times of the project. Donna confirmed that the grid connection is 2032 and the construction takes around 2 years, but funding needs to be secured which will take some time for a project of this size.

Cllr M Turner asked about the electricity going to the sub-station. It is not known at this stage what the electrical configuration will be. Cllr S Knight expressed concerns about the large amount of solar installations that are being constructed in the area. Donna explained that what is driving these installations is the deregulation of the energy industry which means that the electricity generation must now be funded by the private sector. The private sector will only develop where it is going to be profitable. Lincolnshire is popular as it is on the East Coast and is a steady state. It has a lot of farmland, but these projects are generally built on poorer quality land. Lincolnshire has an infrastructure in place with power stations and power lines and there is capacity within the grid. Cllr T Bentham asked about the size of the storage facilities. It was confirmed that they were around the size of a shipping container so can be concealed by hedging. There will be approximately 91 thousand panels on the site.

Cllr Bierley confirmed that because of the size of this project the planning decisions will be taken locally and not deemed a national infrastructure which would have to be decided by the Secretary of State.

## **3. Public Questions**

A resident asked why it has moved more towards Keelby. It was confirmed that this was due to problems with the electricity storage area and other areas that had been considered were not suitable. The storage area is now within the panels to reduce the visual impact.

A resident asked whether it would still be possible to access North Beck drain for maintenance. It was confirmed that there is a setback of 40 metres, so access is maintained.

A resident asked if there will be a community fund for Keelby as one was mentioned in the plans for Stallingborough. It was confirmed that there is likely to be a community benefit fund, which would include Keelby but no details are available yet.

A resident asked about more GP appointments in Keelby. They asked if this has been brought up at the Patient Participation Group (PPG) Cllr T Wright who is a member of the PPG confirmed that the Roxton Practice are analysing data and will report back to a Parish Council meeting soon.

A resident asked if CCTV could be installed at the Keelby Sports Ground as Laceby had recently had theirs funded by Police Commissioner anti-social behaviour fund. Cllr T Wright said

he had previously applied to this fund but they will only fund in NE Lincolnshire and Lincolnshire doesn't have a similar fund.

A Resident commented on the parking restrictions outside the Church. There is going to be a consultation on this so the resident will have an opportunity to comment on this.

A resident said about the Keep Britain Campaign seems to have been overlooked by Keelby. This was noted.

#### **4. Ideas for Community Projects**

Cllr O Bierley confirmed that the bus shelters are still available from West Lindsey. There were no ideas from the public for projects

#### **5. Closing Remarks**

Meeting closed at 19:45