

ASHWELLTHORPE AND FUNDENHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 21st March 2023 at 7pm
Meeting held at Thorpe Hall Ashwellthorpe

Present: J Ives (Chair)

N de Spon
G Williams
R Burridge
S Allen
C Leggett
Alan Arber Parish Clerk

No members of the public including County Councillor Barry Duffin, District Councillors Mr Legg, and Cllr Francis.

- 1) Apologies for Absence
Apologies from Cllr Spratt and Cllr Engamba received all agreed to accept
- 2) Declarations of Interest
All members of the village hall committee declared an interest
J Ives for a payment
All agreed to accept.
- 3) Minutes of the Meeting on 21st march 2023
Agreed and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of the meeting.
Proposed. Cllr Williams Seconded Cllr Leggett
- 4) Public Open Forum
County Councillor Barry Duffin gave the following report
Budget approved for County at 4.99% made up of 2.99% normal council tax and 2.00% for social care.
1000 trees and hedgerows moving forward
2nd River crossing is called Herring Bridge in Great Yarmouth
New Car farm for Norfolk along with 10 other areas and a grant of £440,000 is being discussed
Norfolk Museums getting grants of £4million
Norfolk and Suffolk councils have agreed to send an ultimatum to Pylons regarding actual costs for undersea cable not over head more details to follow.
Councillor Legg gave the following report
Council Tax frozen for this year by District council
Horizon move is to be finalised by late May although some areas are being used for the election
Nutrient Neutrality is still not resolved but a scheme is being proposed regarding setting up of Reed beds in areas to offset the nutrients at approx. £5000 per dwelling.

Chair.....

The Swardeston sub station is undergoing an upgrade that should result in new job opportunities and both Broadland DC and South Norfolk DC have indicated support for this programme and it has no bearing on the Eqinour project.

New battery substations are being proposed for Ketteringham, Mulbarton and Flordon but as yet no information is forthcoming

There is also talk of a new solar farm around Marsh Lane Bracon Ash

The Kings Coronation Grants are forthcoming.

The levelling up and regeneration bill is slowly going through parliament which is going to allow local authorities to take control of their local allocations.

A new major trauma centre is being proposed for the NNUH so that access to care regarding major accidents will assist people not have to travel more than 45 minutes for assistance because at present Cambridge is the nearest major trauma centre.

Finally, dental provision is being looked at from April this year and will be run by The Integrated Care Board but concerns were raised around how these services will be accessed.

Councillor Spratt made the following report

The councillor sent his lengthy report to the clerk and all councillors have a copy for their attention and is attached as [Appendix 1](#)

5). Planning

The following applications were received

a). 2023/0488 No comment

b).2023/0621 No comment as planning application looks incomplete and does not show the new entrance

6). Matters Arising from previous Minutes,

a) speed awareness machines and battery faults

Cllr Williams commented that he had no access to the speed indicator boxes as the padlocks are rusted up. Cllr Williams will look at cutting these off if he cannot access the padlocks. Cllr will liaise with Cllr Burrige on this.

b). To discuss speeding around Common Road/Trace Road along the B1135

The clerk reported that he had spoke to Highways on this matter and as it was a national speed limit of 60 mph set by National Highways, they doubted that it would be revised although they did admit it was a difficult road due to the bends and the road suddenly coming into the village at 30 mph

7). Finance

a) Payments Since Last Meeting

None.

b) Payments for Agreement

The following payments were agreed:

I.	A Arber	February Salary	£497.21
II.	HMRC	Tax and NI	£125.13
III.	EE	Mobile Internet for Clerk's office Jan	£36.00
IV.	Npower	Street Lights Dec	£32.46
V.	Viking	warm space sundries	£67.97

Chair.....

VI.	KBS depot for new benches	£2469.60
VII.	NGF Play for New Play area	£16445.86
VIII.	Glasdon for Life Buoys	£151.20
IX.	J Ives for warm space sundries	£9.92
X.	SNDC for annual dog bin charge	£663.60
XI.	Mardens gardens for Grass Cutting	£62.50
XII.	ICO for annual membership	£35.00
XIII.	Alan Arber Items for Coronation event	£175.80
XIV.	Thorpe hall Warm space hire costs	£TBA
XV.	Costs for transfer of Village Hall	£307.20
XVI.	Alan Arber for TEN Notice	£21.00
XVII.	Spire Solicitors For Hall Transfer	£307.20
XVIII.	Cost of hall hire for meetings	£113.40
	Proposed Cllr Leggett	Seconded Cllr Allen

- c) Receipts since the Last Meeting:
£200 Coronation grant
£4.28 Interest on Community account

d) Financial Position as of 1st March 2023

The bank statements had now been received and the balance at the start of the meeting was £24617.06 in the current account and £3455.19 making a total of £20.396.52 as per the councillor's report but there are some more payments to come out for warm space, play area, TEN notice and Solicitors costs

Proposed Cllr Allen Seconded Cllr Leggett

- 8). To receive an update on Thorpe Hall
All has gone through and new signs are being sourced, Bookings are up and resolution with Npower on bills. The brown tourist sign is being looked at by the clerk.
A discussion on the fencing and the issues of when it will be open and it was agreed to leave it one week when it has time to settle. Public space protection order and dogs should not be allowed in the play area and a new fence is needed to keep dogs out in the first instance. It was agreed to look at the types of fencing and costs. Issues with dog mess are becoming a real issue.
A question was asked on the tennis courts and the key code is needed 1949 is the number.
- 9). To receive a report and to consider any necessary action regarding:
- a). Footpaths
No report from the Footpath warden. The clerk reported that he had produced a pack for the footpath warden and a question was asked on the footpath near Thorpe Hall and it was noted it was now open
- b). Village maintenance
Benches and Life buoys have arrived and a date to erect these is needed asap

Chair.....

Pad for the bench has been dug and it was hoped to be installed soon. Lifebuoy's locations were discussed with one each side of the pond with the possibility of one being sited on the fence by the outlet on Muskett Road the other at another location outside of the pond so all areas are covered

c). Community speed watch

Training new people and then speed watch will restart

d). To receive the village hall report including the warm space and future events
The warm space attendance continues to stay in its current numbers and finishes next week 28th march when the clerk will send the monitoring details in along with any other information that is required.

A new book club has come from this along with the prospect of a coffee morning once a month.

Coronation all moving forward with a Trustees meeting with lots of items and events booked.

TEN licences received

Bramble Bears doing art exhibition

All volunteers needed please

e). To discuss the purchase of litter bins for the playing field

The clerk to look at this and get prices for all councillors to agree the type and costs before we order these

f). To discuss Defibrillator Training

Cllr Engamba will run this and will open this up to the whole parish.

g). To discuss the printing of the Mardle and options to move forward with an online version

Deferred

h). To discuss the allocation of roles to councillors

Deferred

10). To note correspondence received

Election Nomination packs received back from 4 councillors

Life buoys received

Benches received KBS depot

Website updated

Essential seminar attended

Excel and word Training attended

Play Equipment work started

Planning applications as detailed earlier received

Monitoring form for warm space received

Year end documents from PKF Littlejohn received

Apologies from Serge

Ian Spratt Report

TEN Notice applied for and received

Community awards and nominations from The Parish Council

BHIB and Zurich information packs received and dealing with

Coronation grant form submitted

Coronation grant received £200

Chair.....

Coronation items received just awaiting banners
Clusters Information submitted
Various invoices as detailed in payments

11). Items for the Next Meeting:

Year-end Internal control
Year-end figures completed
Budget and receipts v Payments
Coronation information and leaflet drop
Fencing for new play area
Bins for playing field

12). Date and Place of the Next Meeting:

18th April 2023 at Thorpe Hall at 7.00 pm

Meeting closed at 8.14pm

Chair.....

Ashwellthorpe & Fundenhall Parish Council report 21st March 2023

Apologies for not attending. I have prior commitments.

- **Devolution: Extraordinary Council meeting 6th March.**

This was voted against by full council and was described as a shabby and derisory deal. Financially poor with little benefit to us as a County. It appears that both Norfolk and Suffolk are being fobbed off.

Devolution (in my opinion) is essentially a good idea but not what is been offered!

- **East Anglia Green (Pylons) update:**

Pressure is still been put on National Grid by opposition groups throughout Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex.

The BBC Countryfile programme (about 3 weeks ago) featured a 10 minute piece on the 'Pylons', the lead campaigner in Norfolk, Rosie Pearson, presented a good case for alternative approaches, especially the offshore option. During the programme National Grid stated that the cost for onshore would be £1 Billion and offshore would be £5 Billion!

Subsequent to the programme's transmission a report by National Grid ESO (Electricity System Operator) whose parent company is National Grid PLC, states that this claim is false!

A letter detailing the figures calculated by National Grid ESO has been sent by Pylons East Anglia to John Pettigrew, CEO of National Grid. **A copy of this letter has been sent to Alan Arber.**

This letter appears to have created a response because I have just received a press release, 700 words! (also sent to Alan) from East Anglia Pylons which states the following:

Following a major U-Turn by National Grid over its initial proposals to construct 180Km of 50 metre-high pylons across East Anglia without seriously considering options like offshore cables – the company has now agreed to conduct a new transmission review over the next few months.

So, in summary the anti-pylons campaign does appear to be ruffling some feathers. Watch this space.

PTO...

I attended the recent Economy & Environment Policy Committee recently.

On Agenda: Environment & Strategy Delivery Plan

There were a couple of topics worth mentioning:

The plan to reduce carbon emissions from the council's activities and meet the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

There's a tree planting plan to increase biodiversity, community wellbeing and engagement and carbon sequestration.

The aim is to plant trees on South Norfolk land and support residents, communities and businesses to also plant trees with **financial support and advice**. Scrutiny will be applied to ensure that the land is suitable for planting and the right tree goes in the right place.

The aim is to engage with community groups, partner organisations and town and parish councils to plant 10,000 new trees within the district

Voter ID.

Still causing concern but we are assured by Trevor Holden MD SN that by operating with extra staff, including polling inspectors on 4th May we will get there. He did state however that it is 'a vexed issue' but 'we have to work with what we've got'.

My best advice is to go for a postal vote or make sure you have the appropriate ID. Student cards still in contention so if you've got first time voters in the family get the **Voter Authority Certificate**.

Ian Spratt



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John Pettigrew
Chief Executive Officer
National Grid

22 February 2023

Dear John

Offshore costs vs pylons: BBC Countryfile

National Grid claimed on BBC Countryfile (a programme watched by over six million people across the country) on February 19th 2023 that the 'East Anglia GREEN' pylons proposal is £4billion cheaper than an offshore option, and that pylons provide better value to the public. National Grid told the BBC that the cost of the pylon proposal is £1billion, and that to build offshore would cost more than £5billion.

However, the report¹ published by National Grid ESO demonstrates that this claim is false. National Grid ESO's report looks at two scenarios:

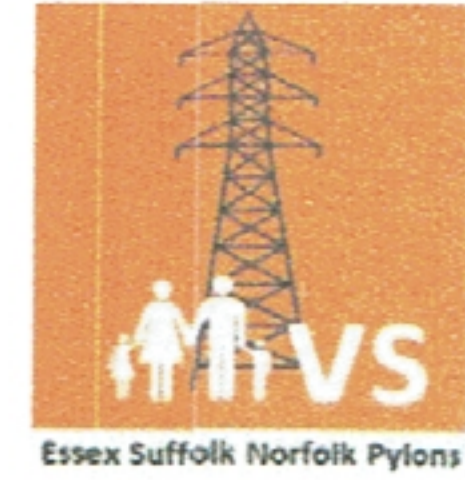
- an integrated offshore grid for the East of England; and
- a continuation of the current piecemeal/radial and pylons approach.

The report concluded that an integrated offshore grid for the East of England would cost only £5.263billion while the piecemeal and pylons approach would cost £7.52billion².

Note that £2billion saving from an offshore grid is just 'hard cash', before before taking into account the impact on communities, the environment, landscape, wildlife and heritage. National Grid ESO conclude that the offshore grid would also be cheaper to operate, and that the social and environmental impacts are even more significant. Under Treasury Green Book rules, under which National Grid is expected to operate, (confirmed to us by OFGEM) there is more to a project than just hard cash, and the other factors must be taken into account.

¹ <https://www.nationalgrideso.com/document/182936/download>

² Specifically, with the integrated offshore grid, the offshore component would be £87million cheaper than the piecemeal and pylons approach². This is because the overall amount of infrastructure required in an integrated offshore grid is lower. While there would be money spent on 'HVDC platforms carrying converters of 2.64 GW for bipole connections' the total would be lower because far less cabling would be involved than in the piecemeal and pylons approach. In the same scenario, the amount of onshore infrastructure required is significantly reduced, with a saving of £2.171billion.



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It is essential that National Grid pauses its forthcoming pylons consultation. Properly priced and evidenced options must be set out as required by law, as per our legal opinion by Charles Banner KC last summer. The consultation must also take into account the current review of the East of England by National Grid ESO and demonstrate how Treasury Green Book rules have been followed.

In addition, I would be grateful if you could explain how you will set the public record straight on the costs put forward on Countryfile.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Rosie Pearson
pylons@mail.com
07766 650208

East Anglia Pylons press release 20th march 23

'National Grid must now postpone its plans for second localised public consultations across East Anglia until this review is complete – and we must ensure the review itself covers all of our key questions and concerns.' – Rosie Pearson

National Grid backs down and will now look at options to 180km of 50-metre-high pylons across East Anglia

Following a major U-Turn by National Grid over its initial proposals to construct 180Km of 50 metre-high pylons across East Anglia without seriously considering options like offshore cables – the company has now agreed to conduct a new transmission review over the next few months.

Rosie Pearson, founder of the Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylons action group, hailed the U-Turn as an important step forward in the fight to win agreement to a coordinated offshore grid, but remains highly critical of the protocol around the review process.

She said: "It's a double-edged sword at this point. Whilst we obviously welcome the change of heart, we are far from happy that National Grid has not yet postponed its planned second consultation process. It is crazy that the company plans to go ahead with the second consultation about pylons when its own division is running the review process. NG must delay that second consultation until the review results are known - if not it would appear that the review is not independent in the slightest - and that the pylons decision has already been made."

The review decision comes after months of campaigning by pressure groups including Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylons, backed by local MPs and a 23,000-strong petition. Top planning King's Counsel Charles Banner recently slammed the National Grid initial consultation process as 'a deficient consultation exercise that has really been no more than one of 'back-checking'.

Pearson said: "We now need to ensure the review covers all our key questions and concerns. There has been an ever-rising tide of public anger and concern about this pylons plan – and East Anglia action groups including ESN Pylons, Suffolk Energy Action Solutions (SEAS), Norfolk Parishes Movement, Stour Valley Underground, East Anglia Alliance of Amenity groups and Dedham Vale Society stand united in the battle to switch pylon construction s from overhead to undersea."

" We do welcome news that the review will now be conducted in accordance with the four required design objectives; economic and efficient costs, deliverability, environmental impact and local communities impact. Each of these must be considered on an equal footing, in line with the overarching Holistic Network Design objectives."

James Cartlidge MP for South Suffolk revealed to a 150-strong audience of concerned residents at a recent 'East Anglian Renewable Revolution' event that the new NG review will now include community input.

Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylons group has now requested an early meeting with National Grid ESO (Electricity System Operator) at which it will demand the new review includes:

- A fully coordinated offshore grid. (In the UK there have been reports in 2011, 2015 and 2020 which showed that such coordination is beneficial for consumers, communities and the environment.)
- An investigation into offshore energy islands for associated infrastructure.
- Full survey of, and consultation on, brownfield sites for landing points.
- A study of all alternatives to new overhead lines through countryside, including directional drilling, under-grounding, following existing infrastructure and/or power lines, increasing capacity of existing 400kv lines to 800kv or higher.
- Evidence of all associated impacts - environmental, socio-economic, heritage, health (including mental health), and carbon/climate change impacts (following Treasury Green Book guidelines)
- Scalability of solutions for the long-term
- Full cost breakdown of all alternatives, to include totality of infrastructure and cost. (ESN Pylons group says NG continues to ignore the findings of its own NG ESO's report in 2020, which found that a coordinated offshore grid costs c.£5bn, while a continuation of the status quo costs c£7bn.
- A study of future resilience of the network to 2050.
- Full independence. Actions groups demand the review be transparent, unbiased and with all background evidence openly provided for scrutiny.

A National Grid ESO spokesperson said: " Alternative transmission reinforcement options will be developed by National Grid Electricity Transmission and will include onshore and offshore options that meet required network need."