**HANNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 4 AUGUST 2025 AT 7.15PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL, SCHOOL LANE, HANNINGTON

1. **Attendance and Acceptance of Apologies. Approval of Reasons for Absence.**

Present: Chairman J Middleton, Vice Chairman L Wood, Councillors D Basford, N Jenks & I Wilson.

Apologies: Councillor C Middleton. The Parish Council approved the reason for absence.

In Attendance: the Clerk and 14 members of the public (Mrs S Tomlin, Mrs B Exton, Mrs L Civil, Mrs K Wilson, Mrs J Basford, Mr & Mrs Egglestone, Mr & Mrs Cookman, Mrs P Savile, Mr G Martin, Mrs J Johnstone, Mrs C Hilts, Mrs R Wood & Mrs A Adams).

WN Councillor C Irving-Swift sent her apologies.

1. **Dispensations received and granted.**

There were no dispensations received and granted.

1. **Members Declaration of Interest for Items on the Agenda.**

There were no Members Declaration of Interest for items on the agenda.

1. **Public Forum - 15 minutes - with a maximum of 5 minutes per question.**

To be included with item 3243.

1. **Green Hill Solar Farm – to receive any updates. The PC to consider registering by 14 August to become an Interested Party and take part at the Examination of the Application, this also entails making a “relevant representation” – a written summary of its’ views on the Application as part of the process.**

The Chairman handed over the meeting to Councillor I Wilson – who outlined that the solar farm would cover an area of c3000 acres of predominately agricultural land – 9 sites. The solar panels would either be 4.5 tracking or 3.5m fixed. The area extends from north of Walgrave to Lavendon, with the sub-station at Grendon. The cabling route has not been confirmed but Red House Lane has been identified as a section of public highway for site & cable route access requirements along with any associates traffic management measures that may be needed – between the allotments and Pastures Farm. Construction will take 24 months starting in 2027 – Monday to Friday and on Saturday morning. The solar panels last 20-30 years before needing replacing. All the details are on the Green Hill Solar Farm website, or you can obtain a hard copy for £750.

The application is being dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate (i.e. Central Government). You need to register as an Interested Party with the Planning Inspectorate; to make a “Relevant Representation” and this must be done by 14 August 2025 – salient points rather than an essay. The Planning Inspectorate will then send out a team to look at the various sites and take into consideration any objections/recommendations. Mears Ashby & Easton Maudit are the most heavily effected villages by this development.

A discussion took place with the following points made:

* Would access to footpaths etc be affected – permanently or just during construction?
* Loss of amenity & visuality in the countryside
* The scale of the development – why not put on warehousing/new housing development/side of motorways etc
* What happens when the solar panels are decommissioned? Cleaning of the panels to ensure efficient use?
* Traffic disruption during construction but also additional traffic for maintenance/service once built
* Will there be security lighting lit up at night?
* Increased degradation of country roads
* Size of the development “overpowering” the countryside.

Walgrave has a very active Stop Green Hill Group, which they are happy for Hannington to get involved with. They have also set up a petition available at the Skittles Community shop and sheets from which were available in the meeting for people to sign.

The Local MP – Stuart Andrew had written to all in his constituents for their views. Councillor N Jenks read out a copy of the letter – of those present two people had responded and the Chairman encouraged everyone to do so.

It was agreed that the Clerk will register the PC and will include the following:

* The potential loss of amenity
* The additional infrastructure – fencing/security lighting was not commensurate with open countryside
* The site represents industrialisation of the open countryside – consider using other “brown field” sites
* Loss of prime agricultural land – Grades 1, 2 &3A
* Increase in traffic levels once the site is operational – maintenance/service/cleaning on unsuitable country roads
* Increase in the density and weight of traffic – the countryside roads where/are not built for that use
* Increase in operational noise from the panels & sub-station
* Limited amount of data in Green Hill Solar Farms documentation and no specifications.

The Chairman encouraged everyone present to register and have their say – numbers do count.

The Vice Chairman uploaded details onto the village WhatsApp group of the web address to Register with the Planning Inspectorate and the MP’s email details.

The members of the public left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.

1. **Finance:** 
   * + - 1. **Approve expenditure items received.**

It was agreed to pay the following invoices:

Lloyds Bank plc – bank charges 270625 D/D £6.75

E.on Energy Solutions – electrical testing of street lights Chq 932 £421.20

The Community Heartbeat Trust – annual VETS system Chq 933 £120.00

TJ Whittaker – grass cutting Chq 934 £340.00

The reconciled bank balance was £24,624.87 being General £14,300.96 Allotment deposits & Defibrillator replacement £600.00 and CIL £9,723.91 (from 28 April 2022 monies).

* + - * 1. **Approve income received.**

£20 had been received via BACS for allotment rent.

1. **Councillors’ comments for consideration at next meeting.**

Councillor D Basford requested that dog poo bins & parking on the pavement along Main Street be included.

1. **Date of next meeting – 1 September 2025**