

## HAWKCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council:  
Mr John Vanderwolfe Chartered MCIPD, MCM  
Newenham  
5 Halletts Way  
Axminster  
EX13 5NB  
☎ 01297 34444  
✉ [johnvw@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:johnvw@tiscali.co.uk)

### Minutes of the Council Meeting held at the Hawkchurch Village Hall on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at 8pm

**Present:** Cllr's N Over (Chairman), D Searle, S Bartlett,  
N Over, J Baker, T Greenshields and R Churchill

**In Attendance:** The Clerk (Mr J Vanderwolfe), Cllr I Hall (County/District Councillor, representatives from Plutus Power gen and 55 members of the public.

<b>342</b>	<b>Apologies</b> There were no apologies received for this meeting
<b>343</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> No Declarations of Interest under the Hawkchurch Code of Conduct were made at this stage of the meeting
<b>344</b>	<b>Presentation by Plutus Power Gen</b> Representatives from the company who had put a planning application in for the installation of 14 renewable diesel powered generators on land west of Pound Road and north of the Woodcote Substation, stated that they felt that the application, if approved, would have a minimal impact on the environment and would be well sheltered. The facility would only be used as a backup during periods designated as red or amber blackout periods. They went on to state that the noise levels would be low and that the application would cause no harm to ecology or trees. They also stated that the air quality would remain at an acceptable standard. They stated the equipment is fuelled by vegetable oil. A PowerPoint presentation provided the assembled with a similar structure that had been installed in the Plymouth area, although we were told that the planned generators for Hawkchurch would be larger. There were a great deal of questions asked by the members of the public present. It was understood that the chimney height would be 4m. A member of the public was concerned about the effect that this structure might have on the quality of water, however the consultant making the presentations stated that there would be no pollution of the water. A number of parishioners questioned why this site was the one chosen; an received the reply that it was due to the proximity of the Grid sub-station.

<b>345</b>	<p><b>Presentation regarding the possibility of Hawkchurch having a Defibrillator</b></p> <p>Cllr Hayward, who is also the clerk for All Saints and Chardstock Parish Councils, explained that Axminster now had two defibrillators, that there was one at Miller's Farm, which is actually in the parish of Kilmington, and one in All Saints and Chardstock parishes. If the machine is required you ring 999 and the operator will provide you with a code to access the box in which the defibrillator is housed. The machine talks you through the process and cannot operate on a person who does not need to be shocked. The cost to this parish if purchased through All Saints would be £1,694. All Saints would take responsibility for the machine but a local person would have to undertake weekly checks on the machine to ensure it was functioning OK.</p> <p>The item would appear on the agenda of the next meeting for councillors to make a decision.</p>
<b>346</b>	<p><b>Democratic Period</b></p> <p>The principle questions and points for the meeting were in relation to the proposed Diesel Powered generators, which had been made at the end of the presentation by the consultants.</p>
<b>347</b>	<p><b>Minutes</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> May were adopted as a true record. There had been a bogus additional paragraph from a previous month. This would be deleted. The minutes were then signed as a true record.</p>
<b>348</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>Cllr Greenshields had written to Wadbrook Solar Farm thanking them for their grant, but also pointing out that Damas Lawn had not been repaired.</p> <p>BT had informed the clerk that he would need to seek the permission of the landowner to adopt the redundant telephone box. Agreed that the clerk would write to Mrs Hayball requesting her permission to allow the council to use the telephone box for community use.</p>
<b>349</b>	<p><b>County and District Reports</b></p> <p>Cllr Hall informed the meeting that highway work was in progress at Hunter's Lodge and any improvements would need to be monitored A structural survey is to be made of the Damas Lawns bridge to access the amount of damage and repairs needed.</p> <p>The revised ward for the district council from 2019 would be known as the Yarty ward.</p> <p>Following questions asked regarding the closure of Seaton hospital, if a response is not received by the end of July the matter will be reported to the Secretary of State.</p>
<b>350</b>	<p><b>Police Report</b></p> <p>No report</p>

351	<p><b>Planning (17/1221/Ful)</b>  The application for the 14 renewable diesel powered generators was discussed at length by the councillors. It was felt that there were a great many errors in the application. There were also concerns that there should have been pre-application public consultation, not a presentation of the same day as the council was expected to make a recommendation. The Council agreed that they could not support the application and that it should be recommended for refusal. <i>The full comments made to the planning authority, which were agreed by the meeting, are attached as Appendix A</i></p> <p>A planning application for the construction of a battery storage barn near to the substation would be dealt with at a extraordinary meeting. There would also be an application to extend the Solar Farm permission at Wadbrook Farm from 25 to 30 years.</p>
352	<p><b>Determinations</b>  There had been no determinations since the last meeting.</p>
353	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The following account was agreed for payment: HMRC £136.60 (906). Noted that staff salaries had increased by 1% as per the National Agreement and a new Standing order form would be completed.</li> <li>b) Funds from Wadbrook Farm Solar Farm: Agreed to discuss this in more detail at a later meeting</li> <li>c) Internal Auditor's Report: The Internal Auditor has passed the accounts and the accounts were now in the hands of the External Auditor</li> </ul>
354	<p><b>Highways and Rights of Way</b>  It was agreed that Cllr D Searle would undertake the same clearing works of hedges and ditches as last year.</p> <p>There was a large pothole in the Damas Lawns area  The clerk would investigate the Community Road Warden scheme and report back to a future meeting.</p>
355	<p><b>Motion</b>  ‘That this Council makes a contribution towards the purchase of a bench to the memory of Peter and Margarete Searle’ Cllr J Baker declared a personal interest in this item, which concerns her late parents. It was agreed that the Council would make a donation towards this bench. It would be decided at a later date the actual amount.</p>
356	<p><b>CPRE</b>  A motion that this Council should become member of the Devon branch of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England and a cost of £35 per year was passed.</p>

357	<p><b>Next Meeting</b>  There would be an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council on the 6<sup>th</sup> July at 7pm providing it could be confirmed that the hall was available.</p>

Appendix A –Parish Council comments to 17/1221/Ful as prepared by the Chairman of Planning

Rather than repeat the detailed reasons for objection, which are clearly set out in the Parish Council's comment and is on-line for all to see, I would rather draw the Council's attention to the excellent range of objections submitted by others, covering a vast range of points and issues connected with this application, some of which are not covered in The Parish Council's objection, which is planning policy based; these further objections provide further evidence and insight into why this application should fail.

I note that there are now well over 100 objections received, including those from CPRE and MPs representing both this and a neighbouring constituency; the level of public feeling and concern against this application is there for all to see.

In summary:

- o this is an inappropriate application, poorly researched and presented, where the applicant has knowingly, and on flawed arguments, gone against pre-application advice from the Council
- o the shortcomings in both the Planning, Access & Design Statement and the technical assessments and reports submitted with this application should raise serious concerns with the Council when determining this application
- o the proposed diesel powered facility is not low carbon or renewable energy and burns a bio-fuel not classed as sustainable
- o there are serious risks of pollution - affecting air quality and noise; but, most concerning is the risk to the highly vulnerable ground water aquifer underlying the proposed site, which not only feeds streams, watercourses and aquatic habitats including the River Axe [a Site of Special Scientific Interest], but is also the sole source of drinking water for a large number of properties clustered around Stonebarrow Hill and who have no mains water connections
- o this is an attractive, tranquil, rural landscape of a unique character containing a SSSI, Historic Monument, County Wildlife Sites and several important National Trails and Recreational Path; it is overlooked by three AONBs and is close to the Jurassic Coast - a World Heritage Site; tourism is an important part of the economy of both this Parish and the wider area
- o finally, there is cumulative impact of the energy sector's ever increasing 'industrialisation' of this Parish - which is having a serious and adverse impact on not just the local human population, but also on the area's landscape, environment and ecology

This application is clearly in conflict with Strategies and Policies set out in the adopted East Devon Local Plan 2016-2031 - in particular Strategies 3, 7, 39, 46, 47 and Policies EN 14 & EN22; it also fails to comply with, or is clearly

contrary to, Policies D1, D2, D3 EN5, EN13 & E4; accordingly, therefore the Council, is requested to REFUSE this application.

It should be noted by the Council that there is a strong community will to fight this application and should it be refused and the applicant appeal that refusal, the Council may expect support from the community, who will, at its own expense, apply to be a R6 party, instruct counsel and to bring together all the expertise mustered to date, in order to defend against any such appeal. Conversely, any decision by the Council to approve the application may result in a Judicial Review application, if the decision was thought to be unlawful.