

PARISH OF CROXTON
(South Cambridgeshire District)
Notice of Meeting

**I hereby give notice that the next meeting of Croxton Parish Council will be held in the
Village Hall on Tuesday 21st March 2023 at 7.30pm**

The Public and Press are cordially invited to be present.

All members of the Council are hereby summoned to attend for the purpose of considering and resolving upon the business to be transacted at the Meeting as set out hereunder.

The order of the agenda may be varied at the Chairman's discretion.

Mr Nathan Spencer
Chair

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**

- 2. Comments and observations from members of the public and District & County Councillors' reports.**

Cllr Sandford:

Bin Collection Route Review:

The Shared Waste Service reviews bin lorry routes every three or so years and has now begun a review. This will ensure routes are accommodating new developments in the most efficient way. The results of the review will also allow the service to start to plan for its own 4 day week trial. The employees would have liked to be included in the current trial but don't know how they will get their work done in four days, hence the need to look for more efficient routes. I assume adequate notice will be given to village so of any changes to collection arrangements.

20MPH Zone Application Process You may have already been made aware by the county councillors that Cambridgeshire County Council opened its new 20mph zone application process on Monday 27th February 2023. Further information on the process, funding available and application timeline is available on their website at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/20mph-funding>.

NS to apply for funding for Abbotsley Road and High Street.

**In the absence of a permanent Clerk all correspondence to
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Additional Cost of Living Support

Plans for a further cost of living support package for residents, worth more than £200,000, have been published by South Cambs. The proposals will be discussed at Cabinet on 20 March and include:

- A roadshow of cost of living talks, organised in partnership with parish councils, to highlight support available to the most vulnerable. This would improve the reach and uptake of grants and other support services as many do not know what is available to them.
- 25 Warm Hubs have been running across South Cambridgeshire this winter, with more than 2,000 visits recorded up to the start of February. They are run by Cambridgeshire ACRE and are free spaces where residents of all ages can visit to socialise, work, and catch up with friends. Under the proposals, some Warm Hubs could evolve into Community Well-being Hubs, offering more services.
- A Council Tax communications campaign to increase the number of eligible people who are aware of, and subsequently claim, financial help towards their Council Tax bill.
- Expansion of the South Cambs scheme to provide free energy saving appliances to those residents who are only just about managing next winter. So far this winter, more than 300 South Cambridgeshire residents have been provided with a slow cooker, electric blanket, or both by the Council. A charitable giving fund, to which residents can donate as part of this scheme, has raised nearly £2,000 and remains open.
- Funds are proposed to help create a South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Food Network. This would link existing food-banks in the district, creating a network of support. The primary aim is to distribute food that would otherwise be thrown away. The network would also create links with local farmers to donate excess food that is not suitable for supermarkets, encourage communities to grow fresh vegetables for the most vulnerable, and promote healthy eating and more plant-based diets. This network will be a key part of the emerging South Cambridgeshire Sustainable Food Strategy, which is being developed by the District Council and will be discussed by its Climate and Environment Advisory Group in April. The proposals build on a package of almost £400,000 of support which was agreed by the Council in November last year. Just over half of that initial funding came from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS) to support community-based programmes tackling prevention and community engagement. These new support plans announced by the Council look to set out what could happen next. The ICS have indicated that they will provide further grant funding that the Council will bid for, to continue projects for the next financial year. The focus will continue to be the prevention of poor health resulting from financial hardship and living in cold homes.

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3. Solar Farm

GS/NS attended monthly update meetings, no additional information is available except that the total area has increased due to the finding of items of architectural interest. Public consultation to be launched in May.

PC has received answers to its questions; response below:

“Local residents would like to be able to view EIA screening report. The EIA screening report is not published on LPA website”.

Voltalia will shortly publish the EIA screening on our project website (<https://www.northwealdsolarfarm.com>) , to enable local residents and members to be able to review the documents.

“Where is the Point of Connection (POC) and the substation? How will that fit in with the new A428 road?”

Parcel C to the northeast will provide a Point of Connection to the grid via an existing overhead line and is the location for battery storage units.

“Have Voltalia engaged with Highways England and for how long?”

We have been in contact with Highways England since February 2022. We have also been in contact with Skanska (Highways England Contractors) since November 2022.

“How many megawatts of storage will the BESS hold at any one time? Is it MWh, or measured in hours?”

The MW of storage is 10MWh - within an hour it can charge and discharge 10MW to the network.

“Have Voltalia conducted an interference assessment? There have been instances where solar panels have affected the radio signals across the country. What is Voltalia doing to prevent this?”

PV systems equipment such as step-up transformers and electrical cables are not sources of electromagnetic interference (EMI) because of their low-frequency (60 Hz) of operation and PV panels themselves do not emit EMI.

The only component of a PV array that may be capable of emitting EMI is the inverter.

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Inverters, however, produce extremely low frequency EMI similar to electrical appliances and at a distance of 150 feet from the inverters the EM field is at or below background levels. Also proper inverter enclosure grounding, filtering, and circuit layout further reduce EM radiation.

“Why can't Voltalia put the panels on the land used by Toseland Windfarm?”

Toseland Windfarm does not form a part of this planning application.

“Is the solar farm compliant with the new grid code? Solar farms have caused blackouts in areas in the past.”

The solar farm is compliant with the new grid code. If approved, the solar farm will be fully compliant with G99 regulations. Before energisation occurs, the solar farm will undergo a variety of tests to ensure it is fully compliant with the new grid code.

“Have Voltalia done an aerial glint and glare assessment?”

A glint and glare assessment will be undertaken as part of the Application in accordance with all required regulations. Any potential aerial impact will also be part of the glint and glare assessment.

“What is the access into the solar park going to be?”

Access to the site has been highlighted in the site layout plan - this can be found on the project website: <https://www.northwealdsolarfarm.com>. It is important to note that access is in its concept design stage and is subject to discussion with Highways England.

“What are the sizes of the HGVs that will be used during construction?”

Heavy loaders (articulated for delivering Plant Machinery and the transformer etc)

6 & 8 Wheel tipper Trucks for stone deliveries

Articulated tipper trucks for stone deliveries

Concrete Lorries

44 foot articulated lorries for delivery of Structures, piles, cables etc.

40 Foot Container lorries (articulated for delivery of PV Panels and Transformer/Inverter centres. 16.5m HGVs - low loader vehicle.

Flat bed/Articulated HIAB lorries for delivery of Storage containers and Welfare Units.

Various smaller size delivery vehicles.

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“On the layout, what is the difference between the light blue and the dark blue panels?”

There will be no difference in the colour of the solar panels. The colour of the panels presented on the plan are for presentation purposes only.

“Why did Voltalia hold the first public exhibition at Yelling Council when they aren't being affected as much as we are by the solar park?”

The date and venue was determined by venue availability. An invitation brochure was sent to residents around the site (including all the entirety of Croxton). Our distribution area for the delivery of the consultation brochure was 12 square miles (circa 700 addresses) around the site including the villages of Croxton (in its entirety), Abbotsley, Eltisley, Toseland and Yelling.

“Information on why the land can't be used further north?”

That land is not owned by the landowner.

“On the Natural England website, the ALC information says the land is arable graded 2, therefore it is best and most versatile. Can we commission our own ALC survey to confirm that the land is graded 2 (or 3 as you say it is). How do we know Voltalia did pay the ALC survey contractor to report that the land is graded 3 as this result suits Voltalia the most.”

The ALC survey is independently prepared, and Voltalia has no role in determining its results. The survey has been conducted in accordance with all required regulations.

“Decommissioning, how easy is it to remove the solar park?”

We anticipate that decommissioning will take around 6 months. A bond will be put in place to ensure that there is money available to remove the solar farm upon the end of its lifespan. This is a relatively straightforward process from a technical standpoint.

“What is Voltalia's return / profit on this solar farm?”

This is commercially sensitive information.

“If Voltalia goes bust, who is responsible for the decommissioning in 35 years?”

A bond will be put in place to ensure that there is money available to remove the solar farm upon the end of its lifespan. This bond will be secured via planning condition.

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“Why does the solar farm end 500m east of Croxton, why isn’t Voltalia using the land closer to Croxton and right up against the boundary between the district and County Council?”

After careful consideration, Voltalia has chosen the best available land most suitable for the solar farm. The solar farm ends 500m east of Croxton in order to enable separation between residential properties and the solar farm.

“Have Voltalia conducted Ecology assessments on all the ponds surrounding the farm - not just the pond within the farm? Have you completed assessments on the pond adjacent to the POC?”

Ecological surveys will be carried out within the red line boundary of the site as well as the POC.

“Will the solar farm affect bats at night?”

An Ecological Assessment Report, Biodiversity Management Plan and Biodiversity Net gain calculator form part of the application and will detail any potential impact on bats at night.

“Will the solar farm affect swallows / birds?”

An Ecological Assessment Report, Biodiversity Management Plan and Biodiversity Net gain calculator form part of the application and will detail any potential impact on swallows / birds.

“Will the solar farm affect diving beetles?”

An Ecological Assessment Report, Biodiversity Management Plan and Biodiversity Net gain calculator form part of the application and will detail any potential impact on diving beetles.

“Where does the electricity go? How far does the local distribution network go? “

The electricity will go onto the National Grid, which will then determine where it should be allocated in accordance with demand.

“Can we get a subsidy for our electricity and energy bills?”

Unfortunately the way energy is regulated in the UK means that’s not possible.

“Can we have a fund to subsidize our electricity and energy bills? Why can’t you set up a contract with Croxton village and the residents to contribute to electricity bills? “

Voltalia will provide a community benefit fund which will be available to support local sustainable community-based schemes or projects. How to apply for this fund will be found on the website very shortly.

“Have Voltalia spoken to Historic England (HE)? Croxton is a conservation village, and HE would be interested in the effect the farm will have on the historic nature of the village and parish council. There are many scheduled monuments near the village.”

Historic England is a statutory consultee and Voltalia will liaise with them as part of the planning application. Voltalia will also be working closely with the Heritage Officer at the Council as well as the curator at Cambridge.

“We would like to see the report from the County Archaeologist.”

The report will be finalised in January as part of the planning application. Local residents will be able to view the report online once it has been finalised.

“What will the fencing look like?”

The fencing is akin to deer fencing, wooden posts with wire.

“Croxton has great biodiversity, will the farm negatively affect biodiversity? CPRE are against solar farms in areas of great biodiversity?”

If approved, the solar farm will deliver significant a Biodiversity Net Gain. An Ecological Assessment Report, Biodiversity Management Plan and Biodiversity Net gain calculator form part of the application and will detail the landscape enhancements that show exactly how wildlife and nature will benefit from the proposals.

“Why is there a large gap in between the solar modules?”

The gap is designed to prevent shading.

“What is Voltalia’s modern slavery policy?”

Voltalia has published a Modern Slavery Statement. It can be accessed [here](#).

“Why have that area south of the hedgerow? This will destroy beautiful views when walking dogs through the field.”

The area south of the hedgerow has been chosen as it is land that is available to use, has good solar irradiance and no archaeology issues. In addition to this, the ALC survey has indicated that this land is appropriate for a solar farm.

4. A428 / LHI

PC has applied for LHI for junction improvements and roundel refreshing on Abbotsley Road

5. 20 mile an hour speed limits

PC to apply for 20mph zone to both Abbotsley Road and High Street

6. Matters arising from the last meeting or carried forward from a previous meeting.

EWR – Progress Meetings.

The Northern route connecting St Neots, Cambourne & Cambridge has been selected, PC to make a decision on next steps once the ‘red line’ plans are issued. MB - Business case is still to be issued, HSE has no capacity to make a decision although the treasury is still keen on the project, support is wavering, new chief exec is pushing the housing and development angle to bring growth to the region.

Luton Stack

No update, RELAS pressure group has been formed to question the validity all residents are encouraged to join their Facebook Group and post crossing flights that break flight limits.

Abbotsey Road Island, Signage, Roundels

PC has applied to for LHI funding

Defibrillator (Village Hall Site) – New funding is available PC to pursue, PC will make moves to purchase a unit and heated case and position on Village Hall.

7. To consider planning and tree works applications received since the last meeting

Planning applications - none

SCDC decisions notices - none

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8. Banking and Finance

Street lighting invoice received from SCDC – Paid

Note: SCDC conceded to the PC stance on not purchasing an individual supply contract, we pay our share through SCDC as before.

9. To consider correspondence received

None

10. Any Other Business

None

11. Date of the next meeting and closure of meeting.

Meeting closed 8:30pm – next meeting Thursday 20th July

p.f. * 20th July meeting postponed*