

Offton and Willisham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council EGM held at Offton & Willisham Village Hall on Monday 28th November 2022
at 7:00pm.

Present: Cllr S Warnes (Chair) Cllr A Rumsey
Cllr I Gilson Cllr C Taylor
Cllr A Chaplin Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh
Cllr A Bye
10 members of the public Minute taker - Cllr A Chaplin

1. Meeting administration

- a) Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed Cllrs and members of the public.
- b) Apologies for absence have been received from Cllr A Cox and Cllr C Taylor and the Clerk
- c) No Declarations of interest were declared on agenda items

2. To Approve the draft minutes of 7th November 2022 and for the Chairman to sign as a true record

- a) Matters arising from 7th Nov minutes

Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh informed Council that the anti-social behaviour on last meeting agenda, is still ongoing. Cllrs voted that the Chairman could sign the minutes as a true record.

3. Public Participation Session (To hear reports from the County Councillor, District Councillor & Comments from the Public)

Resident – suggested that we need to support the Essex and Suffolk Action Pylon group.

Chair – said we members of the Suffolk association of Local Councils, and she considers they are currently very quiet and we are in a position to lobby this group.

Resident – suggested using the website pylonseastanglia.co.uk to register sights that need consideration

Resident – suggested that the council have not followed through with residents meeting. The meeting were advised that we have responded to the original consultation in the past.

Chair – to add the Pylon issue as an agenda item for next meeting

Closed the public meeting

4. Planning & Governance Consultations

i) The Planning Inspectorate consultation request - EN020027 EIA Scoping Notification - East Anglia GREEN project, National Grid

A resident has sent to all councillors, via the Clerk, the Norfolk Essex and Suffolk Pylon Group response to the scoping the document. Cllr Cattermole said that we should follow this principle. Middle Wood is a triple SSI and mound at Offton Castle should both be mentioned in our response.

IN contravention of Holford rules there would be two rows of pylons in close proximity.

No visible receptors have been include in the document these should include, the monument, middle wood and two village churches.

A Cllr suggested that the consultation was lacking in detail.

Agenda item to be included for next meeting – to discuss the response to the East Anglia green.

Response – is going to the pylons group and comment on the environmental impacts and visual receptors.

And add the points that are listed. The Chair will advise the clerk. **This was Proposed, Seconded and all were in favour. The full response can be found below in the addendum.**

ii) BMSDC consultation request DC/22/05517 - Single Storey Extension, Castle Oak, Castle Rd, Offton No Objection, Proposed, Seconded and All in favour

iii) BMSDC consultation request DC/22/05518 - Listed Building Consent, Castle Oak, Castle Rd, Offton Refer to conservation officers opinion

iv) BMSDC consultation request DC/22/05671 - Agricultural to Dwelling, Does Farm, Wallow Lane, Offton

Council in favour of converting them and retaining the building in a form that retains its historical importance. This was Proposed, Seconded and all were in favour.

v) BMSDC planning appeal AP/22/00081 - Agricultural land north of, Barking Rd, Needham Market, amended to a public inquiry

For information purposes, no action required.

5. To formally review and approve the NALC pay rise

This was Proposed, Seconded and All were in favour of accepting the NALC pay rise

6. To discuss and decide on contacting MP D Poulter in respect of the East Anglia GREEN project

Clerk to be asked to write to Dr Dan Poulter to get an update on Pylons and to ask him to attend our next parish council meeting. Letter to highlight the importance of sights of interest in the villages. Agreed there would be a separate Pylon meeting, to be held in January 2023 considering the importance of this subject

ADDENDUM

Formal Scoping reply to Planning Inspectorate

i) The Planning Inspectorate consultation request - EN020027 EIA Scoping Notification - East Anglia

GREEN project, National Grid

Date 5th December 2022

Dear

We set out below Offton and Willisham Parish Council's response to National Grid's scoping report for East Anglia GREEN.

Offton and Willisham's historic landscapes and natural habitats will be dramatically affected by East Anglia GREEN, and we re-iterate our opposition to this proposal. Excess wind power from the North Sea must be transmitted via a coordinated offshore grid. Such a grid has been shown by National Grid ESO (in 2020) not only to be deliverable but hugely beneficial. 50% less infrastructure will be required for a coordinated grid than the current piecemeal approach. That results in cost savings for consumers of £6billion and benefits the environment and communities.

We submitted concerns to the non-statutory consultation but note that the scoping report makes no reference to these. We request that you take note of the Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylons action group's note on the scoping report which we attach with this submission. It sets out topics which need to be scoped in and points to legal deficiencies with the process.

We have read the Scoping Report and can see no mention made of Monument record OFF 002 - Offton Castle, Castle Farm. heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/Monument/MSF5285 and would ask that this area be included in the scoping for environmental impact.

To ensure that the impact of the pylons on this sensitive parish is fully assessed, we request additional visual receptors for our parish. These are shown below, (four photographs were sent):-

View's from the Village Hall (loss of amenity)

Offton Church (historic building)

View from Offton towards Willisham within the proposed Purple Swathe

View from Wheat Hill Campsite (tourism)

No visual receptors have been given for either of our Parishes. The Parishes contain two Churches which are classed as historic buildings and should be included in the report. The pylons would also impact the view from Wheat Hill campsite which brings tourism and much needed employment to the area. No mention has been made of any impact on the village of Willisham, it has been entirely overlooked within the scoping report, despite the fact that the edge of the swathe is directly adjacent to a number of dwellings and an historic farmhouse.

The erection of further pylons to an area that already has an existing line, not to mention the other smaller overhead lines necessary in rural areas will have result in a 'wirescape' that is in direct contravention of the Holford Rules.

Offton and Willisham is in close proximity to Wattisham Flying Station home of the Apache Attack

Helicopters, any restrictions the pylons would have on their operational training in the area would be a serious concern. If the Station were to close it would have a detrimental impact on an already fragile local economy.

Finally, we seek to ensure that National Grid takes fully into account the impact on the parish's priority habitats and listed buildings highlighted above.

We have attached a document prepared by Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylon outlining why the Non Statutory Consultation is not valid and questioning the validity of the scoping report we have been asked to comment on, please take this into account when reading our reply.