

## Hope Mansell Parish Council Minutes

Date: 14.03.23

Start time 19.00

**Attendance:** Ian Lewis, Richard Hibbard, Diana Tobin, Ellen West, Jon Billings

1. **Apologies:** Liz New (Clerk), Sheila Heath, Geoffrey Phelps

**Members of public** - None

2. **Declarations of interest:** None
3. **Open Forum**

Fibre Internet update – Newtown/Baileybrook - earlier Fastershire tender process failed to identify a contractor. Residents have access to funding via Fastershire for interim alternatives e.g. 4G antenna.

Further national programme / fund 'Project Gigabit', currently mapping status of country and then going out to tender to mop up the gaps. According to Dept for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport website Herefordshire and Gloucestershire lots going out to tender in April, aiming for contracts to be awarded early 2024. Newtown/Baileybrook postcodes are in the Gloucestershire lot.

All people affected in immediate vicinity have been briefed b JB.

***IL & JB:** Try to find contact person for Project Gigabit. Possibly through 'Levelling up Hub' in HCC and possibly also William Wilding.*

4. **Minutes of last meeting:**

Minutes were agreed with minor amendments. Following discussion, it was agreed that in future, minutes will be approved by circulation soon after the meeting. They can then be posted on the website as approved.

***Action:** Agree minutes via circulation and then they can be posted as approved.*

5. **Cost of Living crisis:**

Very dependent on building trust with residents.

There seems to be a general lack of understanding amongst residents about the role of CC, PC and what local villagers can do for themselves.

What do other PCs do in relation to Cost of Living?

Think about how to best communicate this information. Possibly present PC as a hub for this kind of information?

6. **Roads / Culvert / Grit / Drainage / Balfour Beatty Schedule:**

- a. Culvert repair date: 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023  
Hole near Parkfields – postponed to end of May for repair (culvert where Bailey Brook goes under two roads).
- b. Lengthsman grant

Forms submitted for Lengthsman grant – worth c. £969 p.a. if granted.

As example of activities this could be used for, PC spent £700 in 2023 clearing mud and leaf debris from Hope Mansell Lane.

c. Bartwood Lane

In Weston parish - lengthsman has inspected and will be clearing mud and leaf debris in 2023-4 financial year.

d. Ditch opposite Moat Farm

J Morgan has dug out ditch which is now running as a clear stream.

*LN / IL: Invoice of £120 received and approved for payment by PC.*

*LN / IL: £250 spend required to clear culvert opposite Street Farm to avoid flood risk and ice spreading across road. Payment agreed by PC, to be paid in 2023-4 financial year.*

### **7. Report from Footpath Officer(s)**

No reports.

### **8. Dark Skies:**

No further update.

*IL: Invite Dark Skies Champion (Yolande Watson) to next suitable PC meeting.*

### **9. Police community Charter – Three priorities:**

Police Charter – 3 priorities requested by Liaison Officer, these were defined by PC as:

- Road safety
- Home security
- Anti social behaviour

Councillor West gave update on car in the woods at BLE – ongoing debate between Forestry and HCC – HCC are supposed to be removing the car.

*IL: Ask Councillor Wilding for support on who to approach within HCC who could action this.*

### **10. Report, Neighbourhood Power report**

J Billings presented report, see appendix 1.

There are now 500+ community led projects across the UK.

Large number of co-operative organisations have arisen from these schemes – might generate income, subsidised electricity etc.

We have a specific challenge with having 4 small disparate and diverse communities in our Parish.

Potential ways to take this idea forward include:

- Make this a standing item on the PC agenda
- Link in with William Wilding to broker access to any Herefordshire CC support/funding opportunities etc.
- Join Community Energy England (£28 p.a.)
- Find out what others are doing locally (e.g Weston)- ? with a view to collaboration
- Temperature-check community appetite for energy or carbon-neutral campaigns – ? link this to Coronation celebrations
- Create sub-committee/working group

*JB: Establish sub committee and have an initial 'what we are going to do' discussion – along the lines of the Ashton Hayes model (started small with energy consumption reduction and evolved over time).*

### **11. SID Update**

- a. Guinness partnership (Drybrook development)

Update will come 1<sup>st</sup> April. Might be c. £200.

- b. West Mercia Grant

*EW, SH: Application paperwork to be completed and submitted by 1<sup>st</sup> April.*

### **SID installation:**

All costs, SID, posts, base, sockets and lengthsman costs.

Bradfords are kindly donating materials for the concrete base.

Lengthsman can do the base installation on 28<sup>th</sup> March, at a cost of £432. PC unable to support on this occasion (previously supported the survey required to gain approval for the location of the SID).

Sincere thanks to Councillors Heath and West for their sustained, 5 year, efforts on this project.

### **12. Council Finances / Budget**

No issues arising.

### **13. Coronation**

Lots of other events going on – do we need to do anything?

Could we lean into the Monday 'Big Help out' (national day of volunteering, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023) and the actions being planned by some of the larger charities, or local activities.

### **14. Litter picking**

This activity continues, gratefully appreciated by PC and residents.

### **15. Communication**

Ongoing challenge to communicate issues/information effectively with residents. We do have:

- village noticeboards
- Weston News magazine
- Parish Council website

PC view is that we share what we can in the above forums, but it is not current or particularly well engaged with.

*J Billings: Draft communication plan for further discussion.*

#### **16. Matters for next meeting**

Nothing arising beyond the actions above.

**AOB:**

None

**Next meeting:**

May 9<sup>th</sup>, Hope Mansell village hall

**Finish time:** 20:38

Approved 20 March 2023

Ian Lewis, Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Lewis', is written over a long, thin horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature.



Hope Mansell Parish Council

# Community Energy Initiative

Initial fact-finding report

8 March 2023

## Introduction

- ▶ Aim: to carry out initial fact-finding to inform whether/how Hope Mansell Parish Council might explore the potential for one or more community energy projects in the parish.



# Background

- ▶ Overarching government policy - Net Zero: Build Back Greener (2021)
- ▶ Recent (2016-date) growth in community energy projects - now around 500 UK-wide
- ▶ Growth in sector driven (in England) by Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF) and Feed in Tariff - now both discontinued
- ▶ Future leadership and sources of funding to be channeled through local authorities via levelling up, local enterprise and net-zero programmes

Source: Community Energy - State of the Sector Report 2022

## Types of project nationally

- ▶ Electricity generation (most common) - includes solar (mainly), hydro and wind
- ▶ Energy efficiency - includes insulation and energy-saving education programmes
- ▶ Low carbon transport - includes eScooters, charging points, electric minibuses
- ▶ Energy storage - heat and/or electricity
- ▶ Renewable heat generation - includes biomass heating boilers; Combined Heat and Power (CHP) generators
- ▶ Demand-side management - smoothing peaks to manage grid capacity



## Case studies/examples

- ▶ Woolpit Parish Council (Suffolk) - funded under the now discontinued grant scheme to develop local energy projects. They appointed a consultancy (Avieco) who led on community engagement and exploring options for: location, technology, financing and governance models - eventually Avieco recommended a biomass CHP generator located at the local health centre.
- ▶ Pomona Solar Cooperative - has created share-owned solar park in Herefordshire selling electricity to local businesses
- ▶ Big Solar Co-op - supplies, fits (and owns) solar panel installations, charging property owners for electricity used (at a reduced tariff to normal suppliers) and selling remainder to energy suppliers

## Case studies - Ashton Hayes

- ▶ Village in Cheshire, population c.1000
- ▶ Aiming to become the first carbon-neutral community in England
- ▶ Wide-ranging campaign initially based on ‘small gains’ around behaviour-change in the village - includes from creating village store to loaning a thermal imaging camera to residents to check heat-loss from their homes
- ▶ Surveys have shown 20% year on year reductions in carbon footprint (University of Chester)
- ▶ Now created a Community Interest Company to develop a ‘microgrid’ providing renewable electricity to the village

# Problem definition - what issue we are trying to solve?

- ▶ Carbon-reduction - net zero
- ▶ Energy efficiency - cost control/reduction
- ▶ Energy security - micro and macro
- ▶ Income generation



## Potential barriers

- ▶ Community engagement/finding consensus - sub-communities with different needs/challenges
- ▶ Organisational capacity - most common reason nationally that projects fail/stall
- ▶ Scale - to realise any return on investment made
- ▶ Access to expertise - options appraisal; financial; technical; community engagement (grant scheme was often used for this)
- ▶ Financial barriers - a lack of feasibility and/or development funding, difficulties raising capital funding, and high grid-connection costs
- ▶ Grid capacity - apparently an issue in the valley and could place limits on 'sell-back' opportunities

# Possible sources of support/information

- ▶ **Marches Net Zero Hub** <https://www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/marches-net-zero-hub/net-zero-information-and-resources/>
- ▶ **Climate and Nature Partnership Board (Herefordshire CC) - chair Cllr Ellie Chowns** [climate@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:climate@herefordshire.gov.uk)
- ▶ **Community Energy England - membership organisation for current and aspiring community energy projects (£28 p.a. for new members)** <http://www.communityenergyengland.org/>

## Next steps to consider

- ▶ Make this a standing item on the PC agenda
- ▶ Link in with William Wilding to broker access to any Herefordshire CC support/funding opportunities etc.
- ▶ Join Community Energy England (£28 p.a.)
- ▶ Find out what others are doing locally (e.g Weston)- ? with a view to collaboration
- ▶ Temperature-check community appetite for energy or carbon-neutral campaigns - ? link this to Coronation celebrations
- ▶ Create sub-committee/working group