



NEWTOWN LINFORD PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council Meeting was held on Wednesday 13th December 2023 at 7.15 pm in the Village Hall.

0908/23. Members Present:

Councillors Susan Pritchard (Chairman), Robert Haylock, Tim Porte (Vice – Chairman).

Also in attendance: Clerk – Hannah Shaw, Borough Councillor – David Snartt, Bradgate Park Director - James Dymond, Tree Warden – Brian Anderson, Newtown Linford Biodiversity Chair – Claire Costello and six members of the public.

0909/23. Apologies for absence:

Councillors Sue Greasley, Vicki Lightfoot and Tara Pickles and County Councillor – Deborah Taylor.

Cllr. Ronnie Bains had resigned from the role of Parish Councillor as of 12/12/23 and a Notice of Vacancy in Office of Councillor will be published on 14/12/23.

0910/23. Confirm and sign minutes of the November 2023 meeting:

These were approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

0911/23. Declaration of Parish Councillor’s personal and/or prejudicial interests on agenda items:

The Chairman represents the Gardening Club on the Village Hall Committee.

The Chairman is a member of the Management Committee at Lingdale Golf Club.

Councillor Tara Pickles represents the Council on the Magazine Committee.

Councillor Tara Pickles is a member of Newtown Linford Biodiversity.

0912/23. Public Participation

Five members of the public were present and one representative spoke on behalf of the group with regards to item 12 i). A presentation was given in relation to planning application P/23/2029/2 - Land at Charley Road, Shepshed, Leicestershire, LE12 9YA - Construction of a 49.9MW solar farm with a battery storage facility with associated access, landscaping and infrastructure. A copy of the presentation is available upon request to the Clerk.

To date, 350 objections to the planning application had been submitted with regards to varying significant impacts including the visual disturbance to the area and negative impact on biodiversity, particularly as Charnwood has already exceeded planning targets for alternative energy provision.

Please see minute reference 0919/23.

0913/23. Police Matters and NHW reports:

The following crime statistics had been received for the period 23rd Oct – 23rd Nov 2023:

1 x Theft from a Motor Vehicle.

There had been reports of recent burglaries within the area and residents are advised to remain vigilant.

Cllr. Pickles will attend the PCC Parish Council Engagement Campaign Inaugural Event on 15/01/24.

Resolve: Noted with thanks.

0914/23. Bradgate Park

Bradgate Park Director, James Dymond, updated Councillors on recent activity and events at the park and work undertaken in liaison with Police following incidents involving trail bikes.

A planning application for a 3.8km track resurfacing within the parkland had now been granted.

An application for the conversion of an existing outhouse to form a mobility scooter storage and staff welfare facility, with associated external works, including partial demolition of boundary walls and erection of gate/fencing is still in progress and a decision is expected within the next week.

A further application had also been submitted for two new dry stone walls within the park.

Possible further future projects include the design and integration of a new pedestrian bridge into the main Newtown Linford car park to improve pedestrian safety.

No agreement had been reached with regards to a third party application for a dog wash facility at the Newtown Linford car park.

Resolve: Noted with thanks.

0915/23. Newtown Linford Biodiversity

NLPC welcomed Claire Costello to the meeting. NLB would like to either extend the trial wildflower verge at Groby Lane or add a second area further along Groby Lane. The area had been surveyed by David Nicholls of NatureSpot and had previously been designated a LWS.

A report was delivered (please see Appendix One)

The Chairman expressed her thanks to Newtown Linford Biodiversity for their enthusiasm and pioneering work within the Parish.

Resolve: Noted with thanks. Councillors were in favour of increasing the size of the existing trial wildflower area on Groby Lane (rather than add a second area), subject to the dimensions of the extension being confirmed at the January meeting. Claire Costello to speak with members of NLB to discuss further and report back at the next PC meeting.

0916/23. Report by County Councillor Deborah Taylor.

County Councillor Deborah Taylor had sent apologies to the meeting and there was no report available.

Resolve: Noted with thanks.

0917/23. Report by the Borough Councillor, David Snartt.

See Appendix Two.

Resolve: Noted with thanks.

0918/23. Village Governance and Residents.

There was nothing to report.

0919/23. Planning: Buildings and Tree Issues.

- **Decisions**

- a) P/23/1417/2 - Roecliffe Gorse, 2 Roecliffe Road, Newtown Linford - Conversion of outbuilding into dwelling, with associated works – Withdrawn 21/11/23.

Resolve: Noted.

- **Comments submitted through Planning Explorer**

- b) P/23/0645/2 - Lady Jane Park, Bradgate Road, Newtown Linford - Demolition of No. 532 Bradgate Road and erection of 7no. dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) with associated parking, landscaping and amenity space (Amended house type and layout of Plot 1) – Objection 04/12/23

“Councillors object to these amended plans and wish to reiterate their previous comments submitted on 09/06/23.

These amended plans do nothing to ameliorate the previously stated objections to the changing of house type, from modest 2 and 3 bedroom single story dwellings, to 4 and 5 bedroom 2 story executive-type houses.

The original planning permission was granted for a development that provided house types badly needed in Newtown Linford (evidenced by the degree of interest expressed to the developers).

The original plans minimised the loss of privacy to surrounding dwellings and minimised the visual intrusion of the development upon the conservation area in the heart of the village and the wider views from Bradgate Park.

Cllr.Snartt has 'called in' this application and the Parish Council Chairman wishes to speak at the Plans Committee meeting where it is to be considered.”

Resolve: Ratified.

- **Discuss**

- c) P/23/2101/2 - Leewoods Farm, Markfield Lane, Newtown Linford - Change of use of agricultural building to dwellinghouse (Use Class C3), and building operations reasonably necessary for the conversion. (Prior notification under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q).

Resolve: No Objection.

- d) P/23/1963/2 - Bensliffe Hay, Sharpley Hill, Newtown Linford - Change of Use of Stables to Dwelling house (Class C3) and construction of single-storey rear extension.

Resolve: Objection.

“Although the proposed changes outlined are modest, this application would result in the creation of a separate dwelling on a single site and not for the purpose of housing agricultural workers.

Newtown Linford Parish Council believes this is contrary to Charnwood Borough Council's policy of development within the countryside and therefore, wish to object to this application.”

- **Trees**

- e) P/23/1959/2 - 4 Main Street, Newtown Linford - T1 - Apple Works - Crown Reduce to previous cuts. Reason - Manage size within space the tree has to grow in.
- f) P/23/2004/2 - Beech Farm, 552 Bradgate Road, Newtown Linford - T1 - Bay Laurel Work: Crown Reduce by 30% approx. 1m. Reason: Manage size in proportion with location. T2 - Apple Work: Crown Reduce by 15% approx. 1m. Reason: Manage size in proportion with location.
- g) P/23/2096/2 - Newtown Linford Primary School - Apple Tree - Whole Tree Removal.
- h) P/23/2117/2 - 546 - 550 Bradgate Road, Newtown Linford - t1 coppice willow close to tennis court; t2 hawthorn crown raise over ditch 2 meters; t3 willow crown raise over ditch 2 meters; t4 oak crown raise over ditch 2 meters; t5 oak crown raise over ditch 2 meters; t6 ash crown raise over ditch 2 meters and cut back branches interfering with sigh screens for the cricket.

Resolve: Noted. Councillors are disappointed the school wish to remove the apple tree in the school playground. Otherwise, no objections.

- **Other**

- i) P/23/2029/2 - Land at Charley Road, Shepshed, Leicestershire, LE12 9YA - Construction of a 49.9MW solar farm with a battery storage facility with associated access, landscaping and infrastructure and P/23/1989/2 - Land at Charley Road, Shepshed, Leicestershire, LE12 9YA - Consultation from North West Leicestershire District Council - Construction of a solar farm together with all associated works, equipment and necessary infrastructure (NWLDC ref 23/01407/FULM)

Resolve: Objection.

“Although Newtown Linford Parish is not directly affected by this application, we share concerns of the effect on the wider Charnwood Forest environment. Whilst Charnwood Forest is attempting to acquire UNESCO Geopark status, it seems extremely unwise to change the look of the environment in such a drastic way, especially when the views from a historic location as Beacon Hill, would be so badly affected.”

0920/23. Bob Bown Memorial Field.

CBC are considering removing the tree branch used for rope swings.

Resolve: Noted.

0921/23. Village Magazine.

There was nothing to report.

0922/23. Parish Council Website/Facebook Page.

The Parish Council Facebook group had increased to 489 members.

Resolve: Noted.

0923/23. Village Hall

The Lovefool 90s weekend had raised £2251 for the Village Hall. A 70s night will be held on Friday 8th March 2024.

Resolve: Noted. With thanks to all the volunteers involved.

0924/23. Highways, Footpaths, Street Furniture, Traffic and Transport:

A covert speed survey of Bradgate Road was carried out by Leicestershire Police Road Safety Unit between 23rd and 30th October '23. An average speed of 38mph was record and therefore, Bradgate Road has now been added to the list of "Community Concern" sites for the mobile camera vans commencing Spring 2024.

Resolve: Noted with thanks.

0925/23. Churchyard and Cemetery:

There was nothing to report.

0926/23. Correspondence:

Charnwood Borough Council Constitutional changes received by email 23/11/23 and cascaded to Councillors.

Resolve: Councillors disagreed with the constitutional changes made. Chairman to write to the Chief Executive of CBC and the Director of Planning.

LRALC October 2023 Newsletter & Training Bulletin received 13/11/23 and cascaded to Councillors.

6 monthly Register of Members' Interests check sent from CBC Democratic Services and forwarded to Councillors on 27/11/23.

Invite to Parish Council Engagement Campaign Inaugural Event on 15/01/24 received from Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and cascaded to Councillors 28/11/24. Cllr. Pickles to attend.

Resolve: Noted

0927/23. Reports on Meetings and Training by Councillors and Clerk.

The Chairman attended the LRALC AGM on 15/11/23.

Cllr. Pickles to attend PCC Parish Council Engagement Campaign Inaugural Event on 15/01/24.

0928/23. Items of interest of for future meetings.

The Chairman reported Cllr. Bains had resigned as Parish Councillor as of 12/12/23. The Clerk had informed CBC and will publish a Notice of Vacancy in Office of Councillor.

0929/23. Finance.

- The NJC Pay Award had been agreed, back dated to 1st April 2023. Back pay had been received by staff at the end of November.

- Payroll provider, Early Years Bookkeeping, have changed their trading name to The Goldcroft Partnership.

Resolve: Noted.

- Councillors considered the 2024/2025 budget as sent out on 08/11/23. A copy of the budget can be viewed on the Parish Council website.
- Councillors set the precept for the 2024/2025 financial year.

Resolve: Councillors agreed the budget for the 2024/2025 financial year and set the precept to £62,599.00, a 5% increase on the previous year, pending the Council Tax Base rate figures for 2024/25.

- **Authorisation for payment of invoices:**

Ledger Date	Payee	Payment Description	Amount	Legal Power	Notes
01.11.23	NEST	Pension Contributions	£61.08	LGA 1972 S112	
20.11.23	Firetree	Grounds Maintenance 2023/24 Inv 9 of 12	£1230.55	LGA 1972 SS 19, 214 & 215	
21.11.23	Firetree	Cemetery – Re-edge planted area with timber log-roll	£262.00	LGA S214	
28.11.23	HS	November Broadband & Out of Plan Calls	£64.81	LGA 1972 S111	
28.11.23	HS	November Salary	£1691.78	LGA 1972 S112	
28.11.23	HS	Expenses – Christmas Tree and Misc. Stationery	£27.07	LGA 1972 S111 & S145	
28.11.23	Community Heartbeat	Defibrillator Emergency Telephone System	£120.00	PHA 1936 S234	
28.11.23	LRALC Ltd	Councillor Training	£60.00	LGA 1972 S111	
29.11.23	HS	Expenses – Replacement Christmas Tree Lights	£134.95	LGA 1972 S145	
01.12.23	NEST	Pension Contributions	£112.00	LGA 1972 S112	
04.12.23	HS	Expenses – Christmas Tree Decorations for festival	£21.47	LGA 1972 S145	
TOTAL			£3,785.71		

Bank Balances:

Business Current Account @ 04/12/23	£ 687.98
Business Reserve Account @ 04/12/23	£ 86,104.26
Total	£ 86,792.24

Bank Reconciliation:

Carry Forward figure	£ 90,357.94
Expenditure	- £ 3,785.71
Income	+ £ 220.01
Balance	£ 86,792.24

Resolve: Councillors authorised payments, payments made under the Scheme of Delegation to the Clerk were ratified and the bank statements and invoices were reconciled and signed by the Chairman and Cllr. Porte.

0930/23. Dates of next two Parish Council Meeting:

Wednesday 10th January 2024 7.15pm (Vice-Chairman to Chair in the absence of the Chairman)
Wednesday 14th February 2024 7.15pm
Wednesday 13th March 2024 7.15pm

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

Signed by Chairman:-.....Dated:-.....

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Appendix One – Newtown Linford Biodiversity Report

Newtown Linford Biodiversity update for Parish Council meeting on 13th December 2023

Wildlife verges: The County Council is currently inviting villages to apply to increase the number of local wildlife verges in the Parish Urban Wildlife Verge Scheme. The biodiversity group suggests that the trial wildlife section in Groby Lane verge is increased in size, either by extending the area which is at the top of the verge, or including another separate section. When David Nicholls of NatureSpot first came out to survey the wildlife area, he was disappointed that it was so small, especially as the verge is a designated Local Wildlife Site. We've been told by the Environmental Partnerships Officer at County Hall that if we'd just like to extend an existing approved area in the scheme, we don't need to re-do the whole application process, but just send a map that shows the extension in relation to the existing approved location so the agreement can be updated accordingly. A new consultation with local residents is only needed if any new properties are likely to be visually affected. But with changes that were made to the agreement, if there is any opposition to the wildlife verge from

residents, the final decision as to whether to proceed or not is at the parish council's discretion. *(Would PC prefer extension to existing area at the top rather than establishing a new area?)*

Our annual **Open Evening** took place at the Village Hall on 9th November. The guest speaker, Dr Jack Matthews, gave a fascinating presentation about Charnwood Forest Geopark, and the talk was very well-received by the 40 people who attended. We were delighted with the turnout, which included several people from neighbouring villages. Some of these are interested in setting up similar biodiversity groups in their own communities. NL Biodiversity is one of Charnwood Forest Geopark's stakeholders. Among other things, they offer support to community groups in the area and are arranging some more meetings and training sessions about to issues such as funding, and recruiting volunteers. They're launching a campaign as part of the Great British Spring Clean to run a Charnwood Forest Geopark co-ordinated litter-picking event between 15th March and 25th March 2024.

Wildlife Walk. Following on from the Open Evening presentation theme. Toby Manning led a wildlife walk with a geological focus in Bradgate Park on 25th November. We had a dozen people on the walk, some of whom had attended the Open Evening, and there was some very positive feedback. (It helped that it was a beautiful sunny day!) Our next walk will be in February when we'll be looking at trees in winter.

Forthcoming meeting and planning for 2024. Our next group meeting is in mid-January. As well as planning the usual range of conservation and other activities, we're going to continue trying to involve more young people and families in what we do. This summer, as you know, we launched a Wild about Nature Challenge for children and we intend to set up a similar activity next year, probably swapping the quiz challenge for a photographic competition for the older age group. We're currently finding out from the Primary School what they would like us to do with them to raise help awareness about Nature and Wildlife, in terms of perhaps arranging a presentation for children to take place at the school. We are also trying to set up some sort of activity session with the Brownies.

Claire Costello
December 2023

Appendix Two – Report by Borough Councillor David Snartt

Report from David Snartt.

Borough Councillor for Forest Bradgate.

Planning Application for Solar Farm.

I have received information about a proposal to construct a 49.9MW Solar Farm with battery storage, facility with associated access, landscaping and infrastructure, on land adjacent to Charley Road, Ulverscroft. I have now put my submission to the consultation. Although this proposed site is not within my Council, in my view, it does impact on the setting of Beacon Hill.

From the information supplied, the proposal will see the instillation of photo-voltaic panels, energy storage container units, transformer/inverter units and a control/substation building. Photo-voltaic panels will generate electrical energy for export to the national grid.

I have had concerns raised from residents about this application, especially the impact this will have on the landscape at this sensitive area of Charnwood Forest. If you are minded to submit your representations about this proposal, the information can be found on the Charnwood Borough Council's website under planning application P/23/2029/2. I will keep you updated as this application progresses through the planning process.

Borough Council Constitution.

I was disappointed when three amendments by my Group were put forward at the Full Council meeting at Charnwood Borough Council on Monday 6th November, all were voted down by the Labour administration and Green Party Councillors.

I was particularly concerned about one of the amendments, which would have allowed a Councillor in a single member Ward (my Forest Bradgate Ward is one) to nominate another Councillor to 'call in' a planning application to a Plans Committee, if the Councillor has a declarable interest.

This situation has already caused me concerns when I was unable to 'call in' a planning application on Markfield Lane, Newtown Linford. This was also raised as an issue at that time by the Parish Council. Therefore, I was taken aback when this amendment was voted down by the Labour administration and Green Party Councillors.

I will continue to press for a change in the Constitution, so that I may represent the residents in my Ward, by nominating another Councillor to call in a planning application when I have a declarable interest. I will keep you informed on progress with this matter.

Charnwood Forest Geopark.

After attending meetings about Charnwood Forest becoming a Geopark, I thought you may be interested in a few details, especially about the new website. I am grateful to Dr Jack Matthews, Geo Heritage Officer, who provided the information to share with residents.

Geoparks are areas of outstanding geology that are used by local communities, alongside their cultural and natural heritage, to promote sustainable economic development, conservation and education.

Charnwood Forest has a geological story that dates back nearly 600 million years and home to some of the oldest animal fossils ever described. The Charnwood Forest Geopark, supported by the Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership Scheme, will be working with partners, communities and businesses across the region to celebrate and promote learning about our unique heritage, support sustainable geotourism and protect local sites. It is hoped that in the coming years an application will be submitted to become a UNESCO Global Geopark.

For more information and stay up to date with the Geopark news visit the website www.charnwoodforest.org/news/

Climate Emergency.

A climate emergency has been declared by Charnwood Borough Council. The motion was unanimously passed at a Council meeting on Monday 6th November. It commits the Council to work with partners and communities to reduce carbon emissions and help limit global warming.

The motion commits the Council to declaring a climate emergency and using that declaration to continue to build on its current climate change strategy. The Council will also accelerate work with partners across the county and region to develop and implement best practice methods that can deliver carbon reductions and help limit global warming.

The motion comes soon after the Council adopted its Climate Change Strategy 2023 to 2030 which sets out how the Council will work in partnership with communities, residents, organisations and businesses to reduce emissions and help after the environment. It also references the Council's existing efforts to reduce its own carbon footprint.

The Council has already taken steps to reduce its impact on the environment, since 2018, the Council has reduces net carbon emissions related to its operations by over 30 tonnes. It has also planted thousands of trees, introduced more electric vehicles to it fleet and is using more renewable electricity.

For more information about the Climate Change Strategy visit the Charnwood Borough Council website.