

Swaffham Prior Annual Parish Meeting – minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 26th May at 7.30pm at the Swaffham Prior Village Hall.

Present: David Greenfield (Chair), Jude Griffiths (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

Apologies received: John Covill, Charlotte Cane, Sandra Gynn, Steve Kent-Phillips, Mrs P Waters.

1. Welcome by the Chair.

Mr David Greenfield opened the meeting and welcomed those attending.

2. Approval of minutes of 24th November 2020.

These were agreed as accurate by those present.

3. Open Question Time

A question was asked regarding the purpose of the meeting. It was explained that it was to allow reports from and discussion of the various groups, schemes and projects taking place in the village and hear suggestions from parishioners for village events and developments.

The Community Land Trust and the Heating Scheme were explained in more detail.

Discussion of the Heating scheme:

Qu. How many have signed up for/are signing up for the scheme?

Ans. It is likely to be over 160. Contracts have been placed and work will start shortly. Meetings on 1st and 19th June have been arranged to allow villagers access to the contracts for households.

Concern was expressed that the scheme would go ahead without enough take-up (particularly to justify the disruption caused by building the scheme infrastructure) and that reports in the national press gave the impression the scheme was already taking place.

Qu. Has the digging up of the roads been factored into the carbon neutrality calculations?

Ans. How carbon neutrality is defined is complicated and changing over time.

Qu. How will the £9 million cost be covered?

Ans. How the scheme is funded is available on the Heating Scheme website and has been for the last 18 months.

Qu. Were risk assessments available for the environmental impact, the depth of the road excavations and likelihood of hitting pipework etc already buried, the possibility of leaks and pollution, the life cycle of the ducting etc.

Ans. These were either available on the website or could be made available if requested by email.

Qu. Had there been a lack of transparency?

Ans. No. The scheme had evolved over two years and issues had been addressed as they had arisen. No information was hidden; public websites, meetings and outreach projects had been undertaken to inform people. The documentation produced by such a scheme is enormous and cannot all be made available at all times, but can be accessed on request by those wanting a greater depth of information.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm