

## **Notes from the meeting facilitated by the Parish Council as part of community engagement on the Norwich to Tilbury statutory consultation 2024.**

30<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 8pm at Great Waltham Village Hall.

These notes summarise the presentations and discussions at the meeting, including issues raised as part of the public participation session. They are not verbatim minutes.

- Over 100 people attended the meeting. Maps of the proposed pylons route were available and posted on the walls.
- Parish Council Chair Steve Gilbert opened the meeting. His presentation notes are available on this website.
- Essex County Councillor and Chelmsford City Councillor Mike Steel added his perspectives. His presentation notes are also available on this website.
- Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylons campaign group representative Steph Dodwell made a presentation and the slides she used are again available on this website.
- Kemi Badenoch MP was unable to attend but has visited the parish previously to review the route, and on 17<sup>th</sup> May attended a meeting in the parish of the NW & SW of Chelmsford Parishes Group to discuss the proposals.
- National Grid was invited to send a representative but none was available on the day.

After the presentations a number of discussion points, observations and questions were raised by members of the audience. These notes were taken (the Parish Council is not responsible for the accuracy or otherwise of the points raised):

- Cost of each power transmission option – overhead pylons are said to be the lowest cost due to the way it has been assumed that various conditions and works (e.g. access roads) will be left in situ.
- There was some disagreement between the speakers regarding the costs and which route is actually the cheapest.
- Offshore windfarm power is already brought onshore at Norwich, so an offshore route taking it back offshore again is more costly than a direct route.
- Underground cables must be fully insulated, and this increases cost. Overhead pylons are air insulated so are a cheaper option.
- Home prices are being affected.
- When discussing other routes it was noted these have already been discarded by National Grid.
- Noted that 50,000 people are assumed to live within one kilometre of the proposed route.
- Environmental savings to be made by going underwater rather than through agricultural lands? Has this been reviewed?

- Manufacturers of cement, machinery and pylons – how will this be guaranteed for UK jobs and companies?
- The environmental concerns for the overhead pylons have been understated with the concrete roads and compounds on agricultural land.
- Offshore windfarms work best - 3 or 4 times more efficient than onshore equivalents.
- Offshore grid – is it too late ?
- Health and Safety – 1974 Act. Any injury or death caused by the pylons will not be covered by health and safety legislation as it's utilities.
- Waltham Gap – Non listed heritage assets affected. Split of the community assets between Great and Little Waltham. A permanent negative effect of the overhead pylons.
- Waltham Gap has the highest percentage of heritage assets along any part of the proposed pylon route.
- The 'Chelmer Valley Crossing' does not follow Government policies.
- What effect does the Parish Council/Chelmsford City Council/Essex County Council objections have? Are they just another consultee without real leverage?
- Noted that for every year National Grid is late in delivering the project (beyond 2030) it will be fined £30m. by Ofgem.
- Why is the route not following the A12? Suggested no room available as 2 sets of power lines already run down the A12.
- Can we march on Downing Street? Noted new administration after 4<sup>th</sup> July.
- All residents urged to comment – it is both volume and quantity of responses that will get National Grid's attention. Do not just copy paste a standard response – also use your own words.

Meeting closed 21.35.