

Mersham Parish Meeting
held in St John the Baptist Church, Mersham on Monday, 29th December
2025 at 7.00 pm

In attendance: 15 electors, 2 non-electors and the Clerk

1. Welcome

Cllr Murphy welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Update on the situation with the Stone Street Solar Farm

Cllr Murphy gave an outline of the concept that we are here to discuss. 10% of the Solar Farm sits in Mersham. Cllr Murphy explained that the PC has ongoing local financial pressures. Cllr Murphy introduced Jonathan Tenant to the meeting, he is a member of the Aldington and Mersham Support Group. Jonathan explained that Judicial reviews are notoriously unsuccessful. The decision made by the Secretary of State was to allow the Development Consent Order for the Solar Farm. This will affect the scenic views and the footpaths for many of Mersham.

The Planning Inspectorate had refused the EDF application for a solar farm and CPRE identified that this Solar Scheme was comparable to the EDF scheme and wrote to Ed Milliband explaining this, however, he did not take note of this in his decision.

Lawyers believe that this is something that can be taken forward as it is inconsistent.

Aldington with Bonnington Parish Council has request £1,000 now with a further £4,000 granted should the JR be taken forward.

3. Questions from the audience

Cllr Bartlett explained that he thinks this is important as it could affect local flooding. He is concerned about impacted soil and views.

Jonathan Tenant was asked what success looks like, he said that there are opportunities that can come from delay. There may be buy-in from the company, technological advances may result in a smaller amount of space used up. Battery and fire safety may improve.

The Council was asked whether the money used will mean increased precept. The funding would come from a reserve.

Could the land be used for housing if the solar farm were stopped? The site is not part of the call for sites.

There was a discussion regarding the adverse cost fees, whether further funding could be requested and whether if we do nothing, do we send the wrong message?

The email requesting funds was only received by the Parish Council on 5th December.

4. Closed Ballot for those who are electors in Mersham

Ballot papers were circulated to the Mersham electorate.

Results:

13 for spending up to £5,000

2 for spending £0.