The following is a resumé of our discussion via Zoom on Thursday November 26 2020 when Harmony Energy CEO Peter Kavanagh, parish council chairman Ian Lamble, parish councillor and chairman of the Skerne Village Green committee Catherine Bristow and the clerk, Jill Pick were present.

Peter said that planning permission for the solar farm on The Beeches land had been obtained; it was anticipated that the project would take about 18 months to complete, with the first payment from the parish gain agreement coming into play about a year after commissioning. However, for more urgent projects there was the possibility of an advance against the 20-year aggregate sum.

Peter said Harmony Energy was keen to help the community and had instituted an education centre for children at one of its sites – projects should be of benefit to a majority of the community.

It was generally felt that this was a great opportunity for the parish to advance some causes dear to many hearts, and that more would come to mind as the years went on. The chairman expressed the parish council’s and the community’s heartfelt gratitude to Harmony Energy.

Some of the ideas of those present were outlined – the list was not exhaustive.

**Skerne Village Green:** it was felt that the current priority had to be the Skerne Village Green, where progress in the land transfer process is ongoing. The intention is to equip the green with some play/sports equipment and a youth shelter. However, part of the change of use planning permission is a highways standard access from Church Lane with the erection of a sound perimeter fence being part of the transfer agreement. Peter felt that Harmony Energy contractors may be able to help with the access while they were on site. This suggestion was most welcome. Additionally, there is an electric pole in the middle of the site; no progress can be made with Northern Powergrid until the land transfer is complete. Peter felt that a new Harmony Energy employee who had formerly worked for Northern Powergrid may be able to offer some advice about this.

**Permissive path railings:** there is a well-used footpath from Driffield to Wansford which skirts the Beeches land at some points. The Whinhill to Wansford section is a permissive path developed by the Driffield Navigation Trust to plug the gap in a circular route which takes in Skerne and is supported by the parish council, which has recently awarded a grant to Beverley Ramblers to upgrade the path. However, there is a relatively small section between Whinhill and Wansford where the permissive path narrows with the Driffield Navigation on one side and a drop into the B1249 on the other, this being somewhat daunting for the faint-hearted and those with children. Railings on this stretch would be a boon not only to the parish but also the wider community. (Aside from the clerk – there is an area near Whinhill Lock where an information board re Harmony Energy could be situated).

**Skerne Church:** Catherine felt there would be many other ideas, including from both churches. Leaders of St Leonard’s, Skerne, have a long-held ambition to transform the building into a community hub as the village has no other meeting place since the loss of the pub and the village hall.

**Wansford Village Green:** A long-held ambition of the parish council is to create a public open space in both villages. While this was coming to fruition in Skerne, the only appropriate Wansford landowner had not been receptive. However, during the course of the Harmony Energy agreement this situation may change and possibly the idea could be resurrected.

**Wansford bus shelter:** This was built at Wansford Lock to commemorate the coronation in 1953 and is a sound brick structure but needs re-roofing and a general makeover. Wansford is the only one of the two villages with a bus service, which is used not only by residents but also by walkers who spend the time between the three-hourly service to complete a circular walk or simply take a linear trek back to base. With financial help from Driffield Canal Partnership the parish council has created a popular picnic area on Wansford Lock for these many visitors to the local beauty spot.

**Match funding:** the Harmony Energy funds could be used for match funding for bigger projects

**Ongoing suggestions from the clerk re projects in the area:**

**Village enhancement scheme:** Catherine and the chairman had previously suggested village enhancement schemes. With the help of the Nafferton Feoffees charity, Wansford has been the beneficiary of a grant for benches, planters, etc. However, Skerne is outside the Feoffees’ boundary.

**Skerne footpath:** The footpath along Main Street, Skerne, finishes near the former Beeches entrance and well before the last two houses (opposite the proposed village green). The parish council has made several representations to the principal authority regarding this issue to no avail. However, on one occasion the ERYC did suggest that the parish council could undertake this work itself.

**Skerne wetlands:** Yorkshire Wildlife Trust has created two conservation areas between the two villages – Snakeholme Pastures and Skerne Wetlands. Currently the two areas are cut off from each other; an aim of the YWT is to build a bridge over the river to link the two areas and create a circular walk not only for the parish but also the wider community. YWT is actively seeking grant funding and this or other assistance might be the basis for a future project.

At the conclusion it was agreed that the clerk send an outline of what was discussed to Peter, with costings sourced at a later date.