



SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Somersham on
Wednesday, 2nd July 2025 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Councillors: J Caston (Chair)
T Hallett
S Wright
S Barrell
P Jousiffe

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk
County Cllr Oakes

SPC66/25/26 – APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS

Apologies had been received and approved from Cllr Rook.

SPC67/25/26 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Jousiffe declared an interest in item 8 on the Agenda (Clerk's Report - Grass Cutting)

SPC68/25/26 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

SPC69/25/26 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4TH JUNE 2025

It was AGREED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th June 2025 be approved and signed by the Chair.

SPC70/25/26 - PUBLIC FORUM

Three members of the public were present.

They wished to raise the limited parking at Park Cottages. They explained the position with the amount of houses at Park Cottages to the amount of bays, driveways and access to the properties.

The residents also explained that they had contacted the District Council but had not received any offer of any assistance in the matter, with them stating that they could not do anything about the parking.

The residents explained to members that once the children of Park Cottages had grown up and driving then more cars would be brought into the equation, so the issue needed exploring and rectifying now rather than in the future. Some of the residents were parking on the verges, which was not ideal.

One resident explained that she had children with special needs and it was a huge issue not being able to park outside her own house.

The residents stated that they had researched a solution and had agreed that the best option would be to cut through the bank and incorporate the gardens to provide the space needed for parking. That would be the cheapest option and one that would be the least disruptive to the nearby trees and telegraph poles. They also reported that they had looked into the legalities of the situation and had liaised with Suffolk County Council, who informed them that they would need the permission of the District Council to cross their land, but they had refused.

Members were in support of the residents plan and agreed that they would be able to put their support in writing to the District Council. Firstly, it should be added to the next Agenda for clarification from the District Councillor as to where she was with the issue. **Clerk to action.**

SPC71/25/26 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

Cllr Oakes’ report had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

She reported that Libraries were back to being the responsibility of the County Council and they would be kept open and improved.

Cllr Hallett asked about funding for Bus Services to which Cllr Oakes explained that as Somersham had limited service users a bid for funding would not be accepted.

SPC72/25/26 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

Cllr Marriott was not present at the meeting. Her report had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

SPC73/25/26 – CLERK’S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S REPORT

The Clerk reported that she had received an email from John Hutchinson in relation to the maintenance of the tennis courts.

He explained that he had approached Tom Hitchcock, who maintained the playing field, to discuss the corner of grass and hedges behind the tennis courts.

Tom had stated that he could include those works with the extra cost being £30 per cut, when he was cutting the playing field. He also stated that to cut the 64 metres of tennis court hedging would be £60 and £30 for waste removal, which would probably be once or twice a year.

Members discussed the proposal and agreed that it would be beneficial to accept the quote.

It was AGREED: That the quotes as stated above for the maintenance of the corner of grass and hedging at the rear of the tennis courts be included in the maintenance works of the playing field and paid for by the Parish Council. **Clerk to action.**

b) TO RECEIVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk had circulated prior to the meeting the Council’s current financial position and the balance in the accounts as of 25th June 2025 was £75,469.09.

c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The following payments were to be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk’s Pay (Jun)	£327.97
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk’s Office Allowance/Exp (Jun)	£33.17
HMRC	PAYE to end 5th Jul	£224.00
CFB IT Solutions	Mailbox Hosting (Jul)	£7.20
Tom Hitchcock	Grass Cutting & Maintenance	£380.00

AGREED: That payments totaling £972.34 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

SPC74/25/26 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None had been received.

SPC75/25/26 – PLANNING DECISIONS

None had been received.

SPC76/25/26 – SOLAR PANEL FOR SID

There was nothing to report as all was working ok.

SPC77/25/26 – VILLAGE SIGN

The Clerk received an email from Cllr Rook, who was not present at the meeting, in relation to an update on the village sign.

He stated that Cllr Caston had very kindly lent and helped to put up a platform, which enabled them to reach the sign. Unfortunately, they were unable to move the sign. It was then agreed to re-paint it whilst the platform was in place.

The sign was therefore painted with Hamerite paint that should last longer. Cllr Caston also provided some yellow paint but the rest Cllr Rook had purchased.

He explained that the stem of the sign still required painting which would be carried out over the next couple of weeks.

The total cost included wire wool, paint and brushes would come to approximately £150. All receipts would be given to the Clerk for approval and reimbursement at a future meeting.

SPC78/25/26 - UPDATE MAINTENANCE OF PLAYING FIELD / TREE WORKS

There was nothing to report.

SPC79/25/26 – SOMERSHAM 25TH ANNIVERSARY BOOK

Whilst there was nothing to report, Cllr Caston reported that in the Duke of Marlborough a copy of the earlier book could be found and reading it showed how important the new book would be.

SPC80/25/26 – PAVILION PROJECT

The Clerk had received an update from Terry Fordham via email, which read as follows:

As agreed at the 7/5/25 meeting the project team had been working on the obtaining of quotes from structural engineers to complete the building condition survey which was a condition of Football Foundation funding and enable the viability of an extension to be investigated. The team had been taking advice on a suitable brief for the invitation to quote and invitations had been sent. One quote so far received for £900 + VAT. We would report further when others received.

*In the meantime the team had been working on community engagement mentioned in our 7/5/25 meeting report. That was a key part of the project and would underpin the search for funding. We needed to identify the interests of the community and build a plan of use for the playing field/pavilion that demonstrated a multi-use capability. We saw this part of the project as having two phases: **Phase 1** - Networking with potential contributors, individual and group; **Phase 2** – Structured meetings with wider community based on questionnaire and local promotion. We were working on Phase 1 initially and our networking so far had been encouraging. Obviously, the Parish Council was a group consultee and we would be interested to hear views on sport and/or leisure activities that may have possibilities to support multi use. Particular personal interests that could be developed would also be very useful. PC group or individual councillor responses were both fine.*

SPC81/25/26 – NOTICEBOARD – COMMUNITY SHOP CAR PARK

There was nothing to report.

SPC82/25/26 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

The following information had been received and would be published on the village website:

April 2025:

Somersham – 5 violence, 1 anti-social behaviour

Offton – 1 violence

Willisham – No reported crimes

Flowton – No reported crimes

Mid Suffolk South & West Area – 60 crimes = 40 violence, 5 thefts, 4 anti-social behaviour and 7 criminal damage

SPC83/25/26 - REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED

Cllr Caston reported that plans for the Wheelie Day were going well. More stalls would be present than in previous years. Volunteers were needed.

SPC84/25/26 – MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

- Welcome Pack to be explored for new residents – next Agenda
- Flooding – Somersham to be ‘next on the list’
- Railings – Community Payback to re-paint them? Cllr Oakes to investigate
- Dog Fouling Bin – Nettlestead – not possible

Members thanked Cllr Hallett for all he had done for the Council, following his resignation due to a house move.

SPC85/25/26 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED: That the next meeting would be held at the Village Hall on **Wednesday, 3rd September 2025.**

The meeting finished at 8.50pm.

Chairman: Dated: