



SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Somersham on
Wednesday, 4th February 2026 at 7.30pm.

Present:

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

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk
County Cllr Oakes
District Cllr Marriott

SPC172/25/26 – APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS

Apologies had been received from Cllr Rook, which was approved.

SPC173/25/26 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None had been received.

SPC174/25/26 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

SPC175/25/26 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7TH JANUARY 2026

It was AGREED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 7th January 2026 be approved and signed by the Chair.

SPC176/25/26 - PUBLIC FORUM

Two members of the public were present. The following issues were raised:

- The Community Association (SCA) had been approached by Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC) to take part in the Sport and Wellbeing Infrastructure programme which looked positive for the area. It would also tie into the work with Sport England.
- Resident concerns over part of an area of Flordon Road where a wild area had been replaced with turf, the concerns being that it had environmentally changed the area significantly.

It was noted that whilst residents had concerns, the ownership of the land was uncertain.

- The current managers of the Duke of Marlborough had been successful through January 2026 with new breweries wishing to work with them, which was very positive.
- Recent rain had caused more flooding in the parish and included Springfield Road causing the ditch water to increase. A culvert had been broken due to the high rainfall and concern was that it could collapse. The pipes at Springfield Road were unable to cope with weather conditions and were inadequate.

SPC177/25/26 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

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

Cllr Caston questioned part of the report where it talked about speed policies for communities and he felt it was confusing. Cllr Oakes confirmed she would liaise with the officer and would send clarification.

SPC178/25/26 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

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

She briefly went through her report and highlighted the following:

- Councils support Ipswich ambition to be City of Culture
- Boosting biodiversity by funding nature in your neighbourhood
- Helping households to save money, eat well and reduce food waste
- Councils call for urgent reform of sewage sludge regulations
- Find out how much heat your home is losing – by borrowing a thermal camera for free
- Disabled Facilities Grant additional funding announced
- Disability Confident scheme overhauled to improve workplace standards for disabled people
- Letter from Minister of State for Housing and Planning to the Planning Inspectorate: Modifying planning obligations
- New social and affordable housing package unveiled
- Government launches Warm Homes Plan
- COVID-19 Day of Reflection 2026
- Mobile Homes: Fit and proper person test re-application starts on 1st August
- Norovirus cases still rising but overall trend decreasing
- Respiratory syncytial virus vaccination for older adults: expansion of eligibility

SPC179/25/26 – FLOODING

Concerns raised earlier in the meeting were noted.

Cllr Oakes confirmed that she had reported the broken culvert.

It was noted that investigative works, by the County Council, were due to commence later this month in Somersham in relation to flooding.

A resident reported she had footage which showed the rising water at the back of her home and it was suggested she shared the footage with Cllr Oakes.

The resident reported that the ditch contained natural debris that must be cleared by residents along its route to help alleviate the issue. Something that was not taking place.

A suggestion was made that a surveyor should be spoken to about the issues Somersham had and was experiencing to which Cllr Oakes confirmed that she would speak with the surveyor at the County Council.

SPC180/25/26 - CLERK’S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S REPORT

The Clerk had nothing to report other than what was on the Agenda.

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 28th January 2026 was £74,105.44.

c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The following payments were to be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Jan)	£308.35
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Jan)	£32.30
Suffolk Cloud	Website Hosting / email set up	£180.00
CFB IT Solutions	Mailbox Hosting (Feb)	£7.00
Suffolk Cloud	Website Training – Emma Lister	£25.00

The following payment was ratified:

Community Heartbeat Trust	Pads for Defibrillator	£61.15
---------------------------	------------------------	--------

It was AGREED: That payments totaling £628.00 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

SPC181/25/26 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Ref: DC/25/05114 - APPLICATION FOR OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION - Outline planning permission (with layout, scale, appearance and landscaping being reserved) for the extension of Port One Logistics Park, to include up to 195,000 sqm of commercial floorspace comprising logistics warehousing with ancillary offices; offices and vertical farms; up to 115,000 sqm of depots and container storage; a solar farm, cafe and substations; new vehicle and HGV access from the south, the improvement of the existing access from the B1113 and a means of emergency access only from Circular Road; associated earthworks to create development platforms and bunds to boundaries; new landscaping and recreation areas; creation of nature reserve and the burying of overhead powerlines underground; together with a full sustainable drainage scheme and the provision of private treatment plant(s). (Accompanied by EIA Statement) - Land at Field Quarry (Also Known As Masons Quarry) Bramford Road, Great Blakenham

It was noted that various meetings had been attended in relation to the application, between surrounding villages.

Cllr Caston reported that Port One had engaged in a Pre-application with the District Council, suggestions of which had been ignored by Port One.

The following concerns were raised in relation to the application:

Environmental

- Five warehouses to be built on a lake
- Proposed 50 acres of roof with barely any solar panels fitted. Proposed solar panels on good, agricultural land.

Biodiversity

- Wildlife and trees were being ignored on the site. The biodiversity and geology of the site was unique and could not be created anywhere else.

Cllr Caston reported that it had been stated that Port One would need to be increased by 110% due to works already carried out at the site

Traffic Movements

- Roundabout proposal at Claydon would result in snarled up traffic and increased traffic presence like the Copdock roundabout
- Lorries would increase and would enter the site on the B1113
- The increased amount of proposed traffic would create an area that would not be able to cope with the increase. It would be too much for the local infrastructure.

Overdevelopment

- Application was a significant area which would affect many rural communities.

It was AGREED: That the Parish Council object to the application. **Clerk to action.**

SPC182/25/26 – PLANNING DECISIONS

None had been received.

SPC183/25/26 – CHANNEL RAILINGS

It was AGREED: That the item be deferred to the next meeting.

SPC184/25/26 – MOTHER AND BABY GROUP

The Clerk reported that an email had been received in relation to asking for continued funding for the hall hire for the village Mother and Baby Group.

Cllr Wright reported that between four and 12 mothers attend the group, all of which were from the Somersham area.

It was AGREED: That the Parish Council fund the hall hire until July 2026, term time only, on receipt of an invoice. Further funding from September 2026 to be reviewed. **Clerk to action.**

SPC185/2526 - WELCOME PACK

There was nothing to report.

SPC186/25/26 – UPDATE MAINTENANCE OF PLAYING FIELD / TREE WORKS

Cllr Caston reported that he had commenced work and was waiting for confirmation as to which trees needed to be taken down.

SPC187/25/26 – SOMERSHAM 25TH ANNIVERSARY BOOK

It was noted that work on the Book was progressing well.

SPC188/25/26 – PAVILION PROJECT

The following update had been received via email:

The architect, Paul Weston, had guided the Community Association (SCA) through the process of deciding the accommodation needed for the extended pavilion. Current regulations for changing room requirements dictated the extra space needed for those facilities and would take up the majority of the existing footprint. A sensible increase in the community area plus some badly needed extra storage had also been included. The resultant area was 187 sq m compared with 100 sq m currently. It was felt that the extra footprint was a sensible compromise and did not lose too much grass. The configuration of the toilets in the common area had not been finalised and advice from the architect was awaited. An outline plan was the next thing the architect would provide.

Once the outline plan was prepared a quantity surveyor would be needed to give indicative costings for the project. The SCA had been fortunate again to arrange ProHelp assistance through Paul Weston's contacts and Caston's would be doing the work pro bono, which would save £1,500. The information would enable the SCA to focus properly on fund raising.

The SCA had progressed our Community Engagement Log with new contact and conversations. The idea of adding lines on the tennis courts for netball was being actively pursued. Once the SCA had a budget for the lines and equipment they would be seeking funding. Donna Finch, Netball England, Suffolk Netball Development Officer was helping. Alongside that the SCA would be costing putting lines

and improving the surface of the multi-use play arena. Both netball and basketball were facilities that the SCA knew the school were interested in using.

SPC189/25/26 – NOTICEBOARD – COMMUNITY SHOP CAR PARK

It was noted that Cllr Rook was in the process of liaising with the Community Shop in relation to the location for a noticeboard and an update would be received at a future meeting.

It was noted that residents in the village were prepared to help fundraise for potential noticeboards at the Church, Village Hall and School.

SPC190/25/26 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

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

November 2025:

Somersham – 1 public order, 1 anti-social behaviour

Offton – 1 theft

Willisham – No reported crime

Flowton – 1 violence

Mid Suffolk South & West Area – 171 crimes. Most noted were = 34 violence, 8 thefts, 6 anti-social behaviour and 5 shop lifting

SPC191/25/26 - REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED

None had been attended, other than Port One meetings mentioned earlier in the meeting.

SPC192/25/26 – MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

No matters were raised.

SPC193/25/26 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED: That the next meeting would be held at the Village Hall on **Wednesday, 4th March 2026.**

The meeting finished at 8.55pm.

Chairman: Dated: