



## **SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Somersham on  
**Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7.30pm.**

### **Present:**

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

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk

### **SPC194/25/26 – APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS**

It was noted that apologies had been received from County Cllr Oakes and District Cllr Marriott.

### **SPC195/25/26 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Wright declared an interest in item 13 of the Agenda – The Duke of Marlborough.

### **SPC196/25/26 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**

None had been received.

### **SPC197/25/26 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2026**

**It was AGREED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026 be approved and signed by the Chair.

### **SPC198/25/26 - PUBLIC FORUM**

No Members of the public were present.

### **SPC199/25/26 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT**

Cllr Oakes was not present at the meeting and a report for March had not yet been received.

### **SPC200/25/26 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT**

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

### **SPC201/25/26 - 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 26<sup>th</sup> February 2026 was £73,538.59.

c) **TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS**

The following payments were to be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Feb)	£308.35
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Feb)	£32.30
James Rook	Reimbursement of Xmas Tree Lights	£19.99

**It was AGREED:** That payments totaling £360.64 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

d) **TO APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION**

**It was AGREED:** That the Bank Reconciliation be approved.

e) **TO APPROVE THE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

**It was AGREED:** That the Budget Monitoring Report be approved.

f) **TO APPOINT THE INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2024/25**

**It was AGREED:** That Trevor Brown CPFA be appointed as Internal Auditor for 2025/26

g) **TO APPROVE THE EXTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2024/25**

The Clerk reported that both income and expenditure would be below £25,000 this financial year which meant an External Audit would not be required.

h) **CONTRIBUTION TO WHEELIE FUN DAY**

The Clerk had received a request from Terry Fordham, Community Association, in relation to a financial contribution to the Wheelie Fun Day.

He had explained that sponsorship enabled the costs of running the event to be underwritten to some extent, with one of the sponsors being Sackers, who delivered and collected waste bins for the event. He went on to explain that Sackers had been taken over by Biffa who could not provide the same free service. Therefore, the cost would be £300.

The Parish Council was therefore asked if it could consider providing sponsorship of £300 to cover the cost.

A brief discussion took place where Cllr Wright felt that £300 was a lot for the collection of rubbish and suggested a quote be sought from Bolton's.

Cllr Caston stated that as he helped with the Wheelie Fun Day he would contact Bolton's for a quote.

Members also discussed a financial contribution towards the event.

Cllr Wright proposed that £300 be granted towards the event which was seconded by Cllr Jousiffe. **All Agreed.**

**SPC202/25/26 – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

a) **REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT CONTROL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

**It was AGREED:** That the Internal Audit Control and Risk Management Arrangements be approved.

b) **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY**

**It was AGREED:** That the Freedom of Information Policy be approved.

c) **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

**It was AGREED:** That the Equal Opportunities Policy be approved.

d) **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

**It was AGREED:** That the Complaints Policy be approved.

**SPC203/25/26 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

None had been received.

**SPC204/25/26 – PLANNING DECISIONS**

None had been received.

**SPC205/25/26 – CHANNEL RAILINGS**

A brief discussion took place where Cllrs discussed the poor state of the railings. It was acknowledged that whilst they would like to re-paint the railings, liaison with Highways in the past had proved unsuccessful, therefore their hands were tied.

**SPC206/25/26 – PLAYING FIELD – INSURANCE AND OWNERSHIP**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated Land Registry documents which confirmed that the Parish Council was the land owner of the Playing Field and were the Custodian Trustees.

The Somersham and District Community Association (C&DCA) were responsible for the buildings on the site and management of the site and had insurance in place which included Public Liability cover.

The C&DCA had suggested to the Parish Council that insurance was in place for the actual land should rare events occur e.g. land contamination or upkeep of the land if required. Also, to ensure the land was on the Parish Council's Asset Register.

It was agreed that the Clerk add the land to the Asset Register, to acknowledge its ownership, and to liaise with the insurance company to add it to its policy. **Clerk to action.**

**SPC207/25/26 – DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH**

Cllr Wright reported that the current tenant of the Pub were doing very well with the pub going from strength to strength.

He explained that they were responsible for fixtures and fittings at the pub and also its upkeep. The current boiler was needing to be replaced with the preferred option being a gas boiler, which would cost £7,000. As funds were tight Cllr Wright explained that the Parish Council were being asked for a contribution.

Cllr Caston suggested that the Parish Council be shown their accounts as then they would be in a better position to agree to a contribution.

Cllr Wright explained that that could be arranged. **Cllr Wright to action.**

## **SPC208/25/26 - FLOODING**

Cllr Jousiffe reported that Highways had been out to visit a resident in Springfield Road whose property was next to a broken culvert, which, when rain would return, could cause a major problem.

He explained that the Highways Representative was helpful to begin with but then once returned to the office the resident received an email which stated that they could not help.

## **SPC209/2526 - WELCOME PACK**

Cllr Rook reported that he had completed a draft version of a Welcome Pack, which had contained information, pictures, maps, footpaths and contact details. The contents of the pack would be checked and then would be ready to use.

## **SPC210/25/26 – UPDATE MAINTENANCE OF PLAYING FIELD / TREE WORKS**

Cllr Caston reported that works were ongoing.

## **SPC211/25/26 – SOMERSHAM 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY BOOK**

Cllr Rook reported that production of the book was ongoing, with an article about it in The Link which asked for any further information that could be included.

## **SPC212/25/26 – PAVILION PROJECT**

There was nothing to report.

## **SPC213/25/26 – NOTICEBOARD – COMMUNITY SHOP CAR PARK**

Cllr Rook reported that he had met with the new Manager of the Shop and discussed the replacement Noticeboard. She had confirmed that they did not wish for a board to be on the outside of the shop building, but a stand-alone one in the car park would be the preferred option.

A contractor who was working in the village had stated that he would be able to make one and further information and a quote was being waited upon.

Quotes for new noticeboards, shop and the current Parish Council one on Main Road had been investigated by Cllr Rook. Costs had been confirmed as being £6,000 and £3,600, which members thought were too expensive.

Cllr Jousiffe stated that the current Parish Council one was in good condition, apart from its legs being a bit loose, and suggested concrete posts being installed behind the legs, which could then be attached to stabilise it.

A brief discussion took place. Members decided that the stabilisation of the legs on the Parish Council noticeboard was the way forward. In relation to the noticeboard at the shop car park, it was felt that this was not pursued at this time. **Cllr Rook to inform the Shop.**

## **SPC214/25/26 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT**

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

### **December 2025:**

**Somersham** – 2 violence

**Offton** – No reported crime

**Willisham** – No reported crime

**Flowton** – No reported crime

**Mid Suffolk South & West Area** – 81 crimes. Most noted were = 40 violence, 9 thefts, 10 anti-social behaviour and 4 shop lifting

**January 2026:**

**Somersham** – 3 violence, 1 anti-social behaviour

**Offton** – 1 vehicle crime

**Willisham** – No reported crime

**Flowton** – No reported crime

**Mid Suffolk South & West Area** – 87 crimes. Most noted were = 49 violence, 6 thefts, 6 criminal damage and 9 vehicle crime.

**SPC215/25/26 - REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED**

Cllr Rook reported that during his meeting with the new Shop Manager, benches were discussed. They currently had one bench which was used by families to sit and eat ice cream or have a drink. Their wish was to have more benches for the community to use and may request help with funding from the Parish Council in the future.

Cllr Caston reported that he and Cllr Wright had attended meetings in relation to the current Port One planning application. Surrounding villages had joined together to form an Alliance Group which was led by Baylham Parish Council. The group's plan was to join funds together in order to receive legal help.

**SPC216/25/26 – MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

- Cllr Caston reported that the Parish Council part of the new Council Tax bills would show a -1.5% for residents, which was positive.

**SPC217/25/26 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**It was AGREED:** That the next meeting would be held at the Village Hall on **Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.**

The meeting finished at 8.50pm.

Chairman: ..... Dated: .....