



SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Somersham on
Wednesday, 7th January 2026 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Councillors: J Caston (Chair)
P Jousiffe
S Wright

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk
District Cllr Marriott

SPC152/25/26 – APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS

Apologies had been received from Cllr Barrell and Cllr Rook, which were approved.

SPC153/25/26 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Jousiffe declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 11 on the Agenda.

SPC154/25/26 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

SPC155/25/26 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3RD DECEMBER 2025

It was AGREED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2025 be approved and signed by the Chair.

SPC156/25/26 - PUBLIC FORUM

One member of the public was present. He confirmed he was the new Director of the Community Shop and had attended to introduce himself. He reported that he would be taking over the project of the proposed solar panels and other ideas for the Shop's car park which included In-lockers and an EV charger.

SPC157/25/26 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

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

SPC158/25/26 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

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

She briefly went through her report on the following points:

- Proposals for Unitary Local Government New Mid Suffolk Youth Council
- Major Milestone reached in the construction of £18 million Stowmarket Innovation Gateway
- Local Government Reorganisation
- Grants with Upcoming Deadlines
- The Rural Support Fund
- Training to Strengthen Local Organisations

- Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan Progress Overview
- Full Planning Application – Tesco Stores, Great Blakenham
- Election Postponement
- Consultation on a new set of planning reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework
- Streetlink

SPC159/25/26 - CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported that her new email address had been set up and would soon be used.

She also reported that the defibrillator pads would expire at the end of the month so replacement ones needed to be ordered.

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 18th December 2025 was £76,465.44.

c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The following payments were to be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Dec)	£308.15
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Dec)	£32.30
HMRC	PAYE to end 5th Jan	£231.20
Suffolk Cloud	Online Training - Website - Emma Lister	£25.00
CFB IT Solutions	Mailbox Hosting	£7.20
SVHMC	Hall Hire – Mother & Baby Group	£648.00
Somersham Tennis Club	Final Donation	£1,000

There were no payments to be ratified.

AGREED: That payments totaling £2,251.85 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

d) FINAL BUDGET FOR 2026/27

It was AGREED: That the Final Budget for 2026/27 be approved.

e) PRECEPT FOR 2026/27

It was AGREED: That the Precept for 2026/27 of £18,660 be approved. **Clerk to action.**

SPC160/25/26 - 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 AGREED: That this item be deferred to the next meeting following drop in sessions and public meetings that were due to be held.

SPC161/25/26 – PLANNING DECISIONS

None had been received.

SPC162/25/26 – TENNIS CLUB

John Hutchinson, from the Tennis Club, had approached the Parish Council in relation to a request to amend the legal structure of Somersham Tennis Club. It was requested that the Tennis Club became a sub-group of the Community Association (CA), rather than the existing independent Club/Association.

The main reason was to benefit from CA insurance cover and have a joint electricity supply. With the current separate supplies there were two standing charges.

He had explained that at present, despite having 80-90 monthly Tennis Lottery players, the Tennis Club could barely cover the expenses.

He stated that the signatories of the Club's Constitution agreed with the principle, as did the committee of the CA.

Clause 9 of the Constitution stated that upon dissolution of the Tennis Club, the assets (courts, clubhouse & equipment) would be passed to the Parish Council. Therefore, it was hoped that the Parish Council would be in agreement. Then for them to pass the assets to the CA as Trustees.

Also, John Hutchinson reported that the only debt outstanding was £1,500 which was the remainder of the LTA loan. The Parish Council was due to make the 6th and final payment of £1,000 to the Tennis Club in 2026. A request was made for the payment to be paid now to ensure the debt could be cleared earlier.

CLLR CASTON PROPOSED AND CLLR WRIGHT SECONDED - ALL AGREED, that the Parish Council approved of the above and support the dissolution and following process.

It was AGREED: That the Parish Council pay the outstanding £1,000 donation. **Clerk to action.**

SPC163/2526 - WELCOME PACK

Cllr Rook was not present at the meeting but had sent the following update:

Over Christmas the Welcome Pack had progressed less as I had needed to take some pictures of amenities in the village. Those would be taken this month and I would also speak to Emma Lister to see if she had photos for the Somersham Book that may be useful for the Welcome Pack.

SPC164/25/26 – UPDATE MAINTENANCE OF PLAYING FIELD / TREE WORKS

Cllr Caston reported that he had commenced works to clear the area with the next job being removal of the Ivy from the trees.

In relation to specific trees that needed attention, he reported that he awaited confirmation from Emma Lister as to which the Arborist recommended should be cut.

SPC165/25/26 – SOMERSHAM 25TH ANNIVERSARY BOOK

There was nothing to report.

SPC166/25/26 – PAVILION PROJECT

There was nothing to report.

SPC167/25/26 – NOTICEBOARD – COMMUNITY SHOP CAR PARK

Cllr Rook was not present at the meeting but had sent the following update:

I have not yet had a chance to meet the new Shop Manager, in relation to the noticeboards. Various quotes had been sought but it was trying to get the best deal when we know we want two and of which type. If the new Manager was in agreement there could be a benefit in attaching the sign to the side of the shop, as previously discussed.

SPC168/25/26 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

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

October 2025:

Somersham – 1 crime, 1 criminal damage, 1 anti-social behaviour

Offton – No reported crimes

Willisham – 1 criminal damage

Flowton – No reported crimes

Mid Suffolk South & West Area – 103 crimes. Most noted were = 51 violence, 6 thefts, 8 anti-social behaviour and 9 criminal damage

SPC169/25/26 - REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED

None had been attended.

SPC170/25/26 – MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

- Christmas tree taken down and chopped up for wood

SPC171/25/26 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

The meeting finished at 8.40pm.

Chairman: Dated: