

SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Parish Council meeting** held at the Village Hall, Somersham on **Wednesday, 2nd September 2026 at 7.30pm.**

Present:

Councillors: J Caston (Chair)
S Wright
P Jousiffe

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk
District Cllr A Marriott

SPC82/26/27 - APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS

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

SPC83/26/27 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None had been received.

SPC84/26/27 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

SPC85/26/27 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1st JULY 2026

It was AGREED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2026 be approved and signed by the Chair.

SPC86/26/27 - PUBLIC FORUM

Three members of the public were present.

A resident from Springfield Road reported that in relation to the flooding issues in the past she had visited The Hold, archives in Ipswich, to search for any information about the ditch at the rear of her garden and the installation of the grille that was currently in need of repair.

Minutes confirmed that the Parish Council, back in 1999, had applied to the Environmental Agency to install the grille at the culvert in the ditch in order to help with water flow and debris which would result in flooding during extreme wet weather. The Parish Council ultimately paid for the grille to be installed and it was confirmed that both the Parish Council and residents would be responsible for any future maintenance of the grille.

The resident stated that records showed that the land itself had been classed as ‘unclaimed land’ which included the whole of the ditch.

Minutes also showed that after flooding in 1999 sand bags had been offered to residents, something which she felt should be explored again.

The resident therefore asked the Parish Council for their help in the repair of the grille as she was concerned about the forthcoming Autumn/Winter and predicted storms.

The Clerk confirmed that she had found historical information from the 90s of when the grille was installed and correspondence around the whole issue of flooding of the ditch.

SPC87/26/27 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The County Councillor was not present and a report had not been received.

SPC88/26/27 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

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

She went through her report which included the following subjects:

- Councils' armed forces commitment recognized with silver award
- Councils repeat objection to pylons project
- Suffolk residents can get a free proposal to replace ageing heating systems with heat pumps
- Changes to Mid Suffolk District Council housing policy
- Social housing fraud to be tackled
- Supported housing residents no longer face a drop in income when increasing their working hours
- Capacity to Build (2026 – 2029)
- Mid Suffolk District Council agree to spend £500,000 to lower community energy bills
- New Rough Sleeping Programme announcement
- Pride in Place Programme: Pride in Place
- A free bus travel 24/7 for disabled people
- Toolkit to help local authorities prepare for heat risks
- Reminder: "Let's Save Water" campaign
- Delivery plan to protect 30% of England's land for nature by 2030 published
- Wildfire Risk and Prevention
- Full National Booking System now open

SPC89/26/27 – COMMUNITY SHOP

a) INPOST LOCKER

David Hayes from the Community Shop was present and reported that an InPost Locker would enable villagers to post and receive online parcels which was a facility the village currently lacked. At present people needed to travel to Bramford or Elmsett for the nearest locker. The locker would increase customer footfall to the shop as well as receiving an income from usage of the facility.

He explained where the location of the locker would be, at the front of the shop so as not to take up a parking space and be convenient for users. Permission would therefore be required from the Parish Council as owners of the car park.

It was AGREED: That the Parish Council supported the project and gave permission for its location in the car park.

b) EV CHARGING

Following investigations into EV charging at the shop David Hayes explained that due to high costs and little return it would not be viable for the shop to pursue any further.

David Hayes also reported that grants had been received with further grants being applied for, for solar panels for the roof of the shop.

SPC90/26/27 – FLOODING

Following the information received during the Public Forum members discussed the grille on the culvert at the rear of Springfield Road.

Members noted that seven properties were affected in the last floods.

Members also noted the historical paperwork which stated that the Parish Council had paid for the installation of the grille back in the 1990s.

Due to the nature of this issue and the costs involved it would need to be added as its own item on the next Agenda. **Clerk to action.**

Members agreed that quotes be sought for the repair of the grille, of which the resident was happy to help with, and be brought back to the next meeting.

It was AGREED: That Cllr Jousiffe contact the Environmental Agency in relation to permission to repair the grille.
That quotes be sought for the repair of the grille. **Resident to action.**

SPC91/26/27 - 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 27th August 2026 was £74,975.20.

c) **TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS**
The following payments were to be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Aug)	£308.35
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Aug)	£32.98
Great Bricett Parish Council	Contribution to ink cartridge - Clerk's printer	£17.49
Business Services at CAS Ltd	Insurance Renewal	£577.23

The following payments were to be ratified:

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Jul)	£308.35
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Jul)	£33.70
Tom Hitchcock	Grass Cutting / Maintenance	£80.00
MSDC	Bin Emptying 2026/27	£618.00
Somersham Village Hall	Hall Hire for Mother & Baby Group	£144.00

It was AGREED: That payments totaling £2,120.10 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

d) **BANK RECONCILIATION**

It was AGREED: That the Bank Reconciliation be approved.

e) **INCREASE IN CLERK'S HOURLY RATE**

It was AGREED: That the hourly rate increase for the Clerk be approved. **Clerk to action**.

f) **INSURANCE RENEWAL**

It was AGREED: That the Insurance renewal of £577.23 be approved. **Clerk to action.**

SPC92/26/27 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None had been received.

SPC93/26/27 – PLANNING DECISIONS

None had been received.

SPC94/26/27 – PLANNING COMMENTS TO BE RATIFIED

None.

SPC95/26/27 – FUNDING FOR MOTHER & BABY GROUP

The Clerk reported that the Mother & Baby group had approached her to ask if further funding could be applied for, for hall hire, to enable the group to keep meeting at the village hall. The group met during term time only and past donations from the Parish Council had been much appreciated.
Members were in support of the donations being continued for the hall hire on receipt of an invoice. They asked the Clerk to liaise with the Mother & Baby Group to ask that they attend the Annual Parish Meeting where they could update everyone on their group's success, how many attended, how many of those were from the village etc.

Whilst members were aware that mother's sometimes gave a voluntary contribution to the drinks and biscuits during the meetings they wanted confirmation that the group did not receive any income, therefore making a profit from the meetings.

It was AGREED: That the hall hire costs be met by way of donations from the Parish Council.
That the Clerk seek confirmation that no profit was being made.
That the Clerk ask a member of the group to attend the Annual Parish Meeting in May 2027.

SPC96/26/27 – PAVILION PROJECT

There was nothing to report.

SPC97/26/27 – SOMERSHAM 25TH ANNIVERSARY BOOK

There was nothing to report.

SPC98/25/26 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

The following information had been received:

May 2026:

Somersham – No reported crimes
Offton – No reported crimes
Willisham – No reported crimes
Flowton – No reported crimes

Mid Suffolk South & West Area – 76 crimes = the four most noted crimes being - 32 violence, 13 anti-social behaviour, 6 burglary, 6 shoplifting and 8 criminal damage.

June 2026:

Somersham – 1 vehicle crime, 1 violence
Offton – 2 public orders, 1 theft
Willisham – 2 public orders
Flowton – No reported crimes

Mid Suffolk South & West Area – 90 crimes = the four most noted crimes being - 36 violence, 14 anti-social behaviour, 12 criminal damage and 7 public order.

SPC99/26/27 - REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED

None attended.

SPC100/26/27 – MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

- Speed Indicator Device – battery checked – all ok
- Possible dog bin for new estate – Next Agenda

SPC101/26/27 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED: That the next meeting would be held at the Village Hall on **Wednesday, 7TH October 2026**.

The meeting finished at 8.39pm.

Chairman: …… Dated: ……