

SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting held on February 5, 2020 at 7.30pm
at the Village Hall

PRESENT

Cllrs James Caston, Stephen Wright, Penny Pearson and Shaun Whiting, were present, together with two members of the public and the Clerk Rod Caird. County Cllr Kay Oakes and District Cllr John Field were also present.

1/050220 Apologies and approvals of absence

Sam Barrell, Will Caston Cook and Keith McKeown had sent their apologies and their absence was approved.

2/050220 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

None

3/050220 To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on January 2, 2020

The Minutes were approved.

4/050220 To receive comments from members of the public on matters on the Agenda, and reports from the District Councillor and County Councillors

A member of the public asked whether the 42 new houses were going to be built, and expressed a strong feeling the village would be damaged by the development. The Parish Council opposed the plan and is now doing its best to ensure that the Highways solution to the pinch-point problem would be as good as possible. The same resident also raised concern about drug use, including dealing, at the top end of the Village Hall car park. The Clerk will request attention to this issue by the Mid Suffolk PCSO.

County Cllr Oakes reported that the Ipswich Northern Route will not proceed. The Ofsted inspection of the school has produced a "good" outcome. She will look into the long-standing damage to the bridge railing by Tudor Cottage and will find out when repairs can be expected.

District Cllr Field presented a written report, published on the website with these minutes, noting that environmental priorities have included £500,000 in the District budget for 2020/21. District Council tax will increase by 1.66% and Council rents will go up by 2.7%.

5/050220 To receive and consider a Neighbourhood Watch report

Colin Burrows was unable to attend but his report was read to the meeting. There had been one reported crime in Somersham during December 2019, an incident of criminal damage/arson near the garage on Main Road.

6/050220 To consider updates on current planning applications, including:

**DC/18/05313 Outline Planning Application (Access and Layout to be considered)
Erection of 32 dwellings on Land On The South Side Of Bildeston Road, Offton,
IP8 4RR – *appeal lodged, as decision failed to be made within timescale***

**DC/18/03114/15 Land South West of Main Road, a development of 42 new homes
– *still listed as “awaiting decision”, although not opposed by the Mid Suffolk
Referrals Committee. No response has yet been received to the email sent to
planners by the Clerk on December 5, and again on January 7, requesting
involvement of the Parish Council in Section 106 discussions about the site.***

The current status of the applications was noted.

7/050220 To consider establishment of a Community Orchard

After discussion it was agreed this was a good idea, and suitable land would be sought, together with sources of trees. Fruit would be available for residents to pick.

8/050220 To consider an update on the Land Trust

Charity Commission paperwork is being completed and a meeting will be arranged with the bank. A Treasurer will need to be found.

9/050220 To receive reports from Parish Councillors on meetings attended

No meetings had been attended.

10/050220 To receive a financial report from the Clerk including any payments due

A bank reconciliation was presented showing a balance of £16,320.03. Two payments were made, to Rod Caird (Clerk pay) for £284.20 and to Vertas (grounds maintenance) for £452.95. The bank reconciliation was checked and signed against bank statements by Cllr Whiting. The online cash book is available for inspection on the website and via the link provided to Councillors.

Payments were made under sections 111 and 112 of the Local Government Act 1972.

11/050220 Correspondence and urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council

It was agreed to thank Mr Hemmings for his voluntary work in trimming

back the vegetation around the raised footpath.

It was noted that some ground testing work had been carried out briefly at the site of the proposed 42 new homes.

It has been suggested that the ownership of Snoasis has changed but this has not yet been confirmed.

The East Anglia One underground cables are being tested and repaired before being put into use.

DRAFT