

# **SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of the Parish Council Meeting held online on September 2, 2020 at  
7.30pm

<b>PRESENT</b>	Cllrs James Caston, Stephen Wright, Penny Pearson, Sam Barrell, Shaun Whiting and Will Caston Cook were present, together with the Clerk Rod Caird. County Cllr Kay Oakes, District Cllr John Field and one member of the public were also present.
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**1/020920      Apologies and approvals of absence**

Keith McKeown was absent.

**2/020920      Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation**

Cllr Caston declared an interest in the solar farm proposal referred to in item 6; if discussion was needed, he would leave the room.

**3/020920      To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on July 1, 2020**

The Minutes were approved.

**4/020920      To receive comments from members of the public on matters on the Agenda, and reports from the District Councillor and County Councillors**

County Cllr Oakes presented a written report. In addition, a complaint had been received about the number of flies in the village; it had been suggested Cllr Caston's farm was the source. After discussion, and after hearing an explanation from Cllr Caston about his pest control measures, it was agreed to write to Cllr Caston asking him to set out what had been done. His response would provide the basis for a reply to the complaint. It was also suggested that waste "grey" water being discharged into the channel may be a source of fly infestation. Cllr Field agreed to ask Mid Suffolk officers to investigate this.

Cllr Field's report highlighted government proposals to change the planning process. Division of land into three categories of zone opened up large questions about how to define the boundaries of the zones. The outcome may mean Mid Suffolk will have to deliver more housing than under current arrangements. Meanwhile Mid Suffolk's Local Plan should go to public examination by December. On the solar farms application, it was noted there are two applications, one of which has been withdrawn. Feedback would be needed once the position became clearer; the farm would likely cover 460 acres.

Mid Suffolk's budget setting process approaches. £2 million beyond current

budget has been spent on coronavirus matters but reserves are available to cover this.

**5/020920 To receive and consider a Neighbourhood Watch report**

Colin Burrows was unable to attend the meeting; the written reports he submitted were noted. Volunteers are sought to help Colin with NW activities.

**6/020920 To consider updates on current planning applications, including:**

**DC/20/03574 – Request for Formal Environmental Impact Assessment, proposed solar farm and battery storage facility, on land North, South and East of Flowton – *withdrawn August 25, 2020***

**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 dismissed; application outcome currently listed as “unknown”.***

**DC/18/03114/15 Land South West of Main Road, a development of 42 new homes – *various condition discharges currently under consideration; and to hear a report of a meeting on August 25 with Hopkins Homes re the boundary of the site and land available to the parish***

The current position on all these matters was noted. Although Cllr Caston left the meeting as agreed under item 2 it was considered there was currently nothing to discuss on the solar farm as there is no formal proposal on the table.

On the 42 homes a meeting had been held with Hopkins to discuss the details of the site boundary. Hopkins was interested in asking the Parish to take on some land outside the boundary and it was agreed the Clerk would write to them asking for their proposals on how the Parish should take on the responsibility. In addition, the Clerk will contact Mid Suffolk planners about the unclear status of land between the site boundary and the existing footpath.

**7/020920 To note and consider recent correspondence from Mid Suffolk concerning the housing land supply element of the Joint Local Plan**

This was noted, and it was felt the Parish Council was not able to offer any land which would contribute to the Plan's requirements.

**8/020920 To consider an update on the Land Trust**

The new bank mandate is still awaited from Lloyds.

**9/020920 To receive reports from Parish Councillors on meetings attended**

None at this time

**10/0209200 To receive a financial report from the Clerk including any payments**

**due; to consider and approve the Internal Audit report for 2019/20; and to adopt the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct**

A bank reconciliation was presented showing a balance of £16,638.50. Since the July meeting the following payments were made:

July 22, 2020	Rod Caird	124	£ 286.00	Clerk Pay
July 28, 2020	Somersham PCC	125	£ 96.00	Mowing
Sept 1, 2020	Somersham PCC	126	£ 96.00	Mowing
Sept 1, 2020	HMRC	127	£ 8.60	PAYE
Sept 1, 2020	Ladywell Accountancy	128	£ 75.00	Payroll
Sept 1, 2020	Rod Caird	129	£ 324.20	Clerk Pay

The Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct and Risk Assessment were reviewed and adopted. The report of the SALC internal audit for 2019/20 was considered and it was agreed to act on recommendations.

The budget for 2020/21 would be considered at the November meeting.

**11/020920 Correspondence and urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council**

It was agreed future meetings would be held online for the time being. If the Village Hall is reopened in a Covid-safe manner, meetings could be held there or could be part in person and part virtual.