

SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting held online on March 3, 2021 at
7.30pm

PRESENT

Cllrs James Caston, Stephen Wright, Thomas Hallett, James Rook, and Shaun Whiting were present, together with the Clerk Rod Caird. District Cllr John Field and County Cllr Kay Oakes were present, together with three members of the public.

1/030321 Apologies and approvals of absence

Cllrs Sam Barrell and Will Caston Cook had sent their apologies and their absence was approved.

2/030321 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

Cllr Caston declared an interest in planning applications DC/21/00060 and 05895, referred to in Item 14 on the Agenda. He will leave the room during that discussion, passing the chair to Cllr Wright. Cllr Caston Cook also chose to absent himself during discussion of those matters on the Agenda, although he has no pecuniary interest in the applications.

3/030321 To approve the Minutes of the meeting on February 17, 2021

The minutes were approved

4/030321 To receive comments from members of the public on matters on the Agenda, and reports from the District and County Councillors

Cllr Oakes had submitted a written report.

Cllr Field had also submitted a written report and drew attention to the government's decision to designate Felixstowe as a freeport.

5/030321 To receive and consider a Neighbourhood Watch report

The most recent report was circulated to councillors.

6/030321 To consider updates on current planning applications, including:

DC/21/00320 | Notification for Prior Approval for a Proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Building to 1no. Dwellinghouse (Class C3), and for Associated Operational Development. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q | Gunns Farm Hadleigh Road – *decision awaited; subsequently refused*

DC/21/00514 | Householder Application - Erection of first floor extension and single storey rear extension (following demolition of conservatory). Installation of first floor window | Old Barn Stores Main Road – *decision awaited; subsequently withdrawn*

DC/21/00548 | Notification of Works to Trees in a Preservation Order - T1 (Holm Oak) - Reduce crown to reduce load on partially decayed stem by approx 3m in height north 2-3m east 1-2m south 3-4m and west 5-6m. See accompanying arboricultural report | The Old Rectory Main Road – *decision awaited; subsequently granted*

The current status of the applications was noted

7/030321 To consider any further update on the request for financial support towards construction of a new hut at the tennis court

It was noted that a charitable donation of £1,000.00 has been received and a grant of £1,700 has been approved by Cllr Field.

8/030321 To discuss proposed repairs and improvements to the Cycle Speedway Track

This is a Community Association matter and has been referred to them for attention.

9/030321 To discuss support for the Community Shop and the Duke of Marlborough

It is understood the shop needs to replace the display freezer at a cost of approximately £12,000. The Parish Council will await a written approach from the Shop for discussion of a possible contribution. The Pub will reopen on April 12 but the marquee has collapsed under the weight of snow. Again the Parish Council will await a written approach before considering a contribution.

10/030321 To discuss an overgrown footpath to the east of Somersham

This matter will be reported to Highways for attention.

11/030321 To consider an update on the Land Trust

Discussion on the Land Trust will be held over to the next meeting on April 7.

12/030321 To receive reports from Parish Councillors on meetings attended

A meeting of the Duke of Marlborough committee was due to be held.

13/030321 To receive a financial report from the Clerk including any payments

due

A bank reconciliation was presented showing a balance of £17,459.17. The following payments had been made since the last meeting:

Feb 26, 2021	Rod Caird	143	£ 292.40	Clerk Pay
Feb 26, 2021	HMRC	144	£ 8.60	PAYE
Feb 26, 2021	James Rook	145	£ 733.78	Laptop purchases

It was agreed to add Shaun Whiting and James Rook to the bank mandate and to proceed with setting up internet bank payments as an alternative to cheque use.

It was agreed to award the contract for grass cutting for 2021/22 to Tom Hitchcock at an annual charge of £1,500.00, and to advise Vertas of this decision.

14/030321 To note any developments on the Solar Panel planning applications:

DC/21/00060 | Full Planning Application - Installation of renewable led energy generating station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage containers together with substation, inverter/transformer stations, site accesses, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements including Nature Areas | Land To The East Of The Channel, Burstall Hill – closing date for comments was February 28, 2021

DC/20/05895 | Full Planning Application - Installation of renewable energy generating station, comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage containers together with substation, inverter/transformer stations, site accesses, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements including Nature Areas. | Land To The South Of Church Farm, Somersham, IP8 4PN And Land To The East Of The Channel, Burstall

It is anticipated that the applications will be revised and opened up for further consultation.

At least one further application is expected.

15/030321 Correspondence and urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council

Cllr Caston carries out the regular check on the village defibrillator and would be glad to hand this over to a volunteer.

Cllr Hallett's planned meeting with the Environment Agency about flooding will take place later in the month

DRAFT