



SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Somersham on
Wednesday, 2nd February 2022 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Councillors: J Caston (Chairman)
S Wright
T Hallett
S Whiting
J Rook
S Barrell

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk
County Cllr Kay Oakes

SPC1/020222 – PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

SPC2/020222 - APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS

Apologies had been received from District Cllr Field.

SPC3/020222 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None had been received.

SPC4/020222 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

SPC5/0202122 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5TH JANUARY 2022

It was AGREED: That the Minute of the meeting held on 5th January 2022 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

SPC6/020222 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

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

Cllr Oakes reported that Suffolk had been one of nine counties invited to negotiate a groundbreaking devolution deal a move that would give local leaders more control over areas such as transport, skills and infrastructure. It could include greater control over buses and trains, to deliver London style public transport or skills programmes which focus on local the needs of local people to help them access the high quality, high paying jobs of the future.

Cllr Caston asked Cllr Oakes about the County Council's Council Tax raise of 1.99% to which Cllr Oakes explained that the 1.99% would be approved at Full Council later this month. She stated that 75% of the County Council's budget would go on Adult and Children's Services.

Cllr Oakes reported on the Warm Homes Suffolk initiative being ran by the County Council. She informed members that residents struggling to warm their homes could be entitled to help. More information could be located on the website www.warmhomessuffolk.org or the team could be contacted via telephone on 03456 037 686 Monday to Friday between 9am and 4pm.

SPC7/020222 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

District Cllr John Field was not present at the meeting and a report had not been received.

SPC8/020222 – CLERK’S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S REPORT

The Clerk reported that good progress had been made with the new website. She asked for any information and pictures to be sent to her which could be added to enhance the various pages.

b) TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk reported on the Council’s current financial position and movements since the last meeting. It was reported that the balance in the accounts on 24th January 2022 was £55,544.27.

c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Jan)	£295.05
Jennie Blackburn	Office Allowance / Expenses (Jan)	£32.30
Suffolk Cloud	Website set-up and annual hosting fee	320.00

It was AGREED: That payments totaling £647.35 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

SPC9a/020222 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Ref: DC/21/06950 - Planning Application. Change of use and conversion of Grade II listed barn to 1 no dwelling house - Watering Farm, Main Road, Nettlestead

Following a brief discussion:

It was AGREED: That the Parish Council were in support of the application. **Clerk to action.**

SPC9b/020222 – PLANNING DECISIONS

None had been received.

SPC10/020222 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

Cllr Caston reported that during December 2021 the following crimes had been reported:

Somersham – one report of violence and one report of criminal damage

Offton – none reported

Willisham – two reports of violence

Flowton – one report of burglary

Stowmarket – 122 reports of violence, 28 reports of anti-social behavior, 22 reports of criminal damage and 19 reports of public order offences.

Cllr Caston also reported that there had been a shed burglary in Somersham the previous night.

SPC11/020222 – PROVISION OF COMMUNITY ORCHARD

Cllr Caston reported that a location needed to be sought in order to take this forward to which Cllr Wright stated that he would speak with a local land owner to see if there was a possibility of obtaining a small piece of land.

SPC12/020222 – RE-WILDING OF SPRINGFIELD ROAD ROUNDABOUT

Cllr Caston updated members on the re-wilding of the roundabout and stated that the District Council had ran out of free trees last year. They had confirmed they would put Somersham at the top of the list for this year.

The District Council had stated that as the land was theirs they would be happy to plant it up but someone to maintain it, such as watering the trees, would be needed.

SPC13/020222 - UPDATE ON QUEENS PLATINUM JUBILEE ARRANGEMENTS

Cllr Hallatt reported that a public meeting had been held on 19th January 2022 to discuss ideas for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the various groups within the village and possible events were discussed such as quizzes, BBQs and a street party.

Cllr Caston, who also attended the meeting, reported that the beacon would also be lit.

In relation to a possible firework display the Clerk advised members that should the Parish Council be responsible for the display then correct procedures needed to be followed. Extra insurance would be needed and Risk Assessments carried out. She advised that if the Parish Council were not responsible for the display they could contribute to the purchase of the fireworks instead.

It was confirmed that the next public meeting was due to be held on 16th February 2022.

SPC14/020222 – PAINTING OF FENCING THROUGH VILLAGE

Members discussed the painting of the fencing as part of the 'tidying up' of the village in readiness for the Jubilee celebrations.

Cllr Whiting agreed to take the lead on this.

SPC15/020222 - REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED

Cllr Caston reported that a meeting had been held to discuss the Wheelie Day which was due to be held on 2nd July 2022. The fete would see the return of Collector's Cars, entertainment stalls and some games. Music would be held during the evening and food and drink vans would be present.

He added that sponsors needed to be sought and a programme put together.

Cllr Wright reported that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) had taken place of the Duke of Marlborough pub, which had been well attended. He explained that the year to March last year a profit had been made which had been helped by grants including the furlough payment from the Government due to the pandemic. In relation to the current year so far the takings in January were higher than those in December.

He added that the pub had started to provide breakfast on Saturdays which had been well attended so far.

It was hoped that the use of the pub would increase over the next six months otherwise drastic action may need to be taken which could result in its closure.

SPC16/020222 – MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

- New Code of Conduct being produced.
- Cllr Caston Cook had resigned from the Parish Council and Land Trust and his post would be advertised in line with correct procedures.
- Defibrillator training requested.

SPC17/020222 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED: That the next meeting would be held at the Village Hall on Wednesday, 2nd March 2022 at 7.30pm.

The meeting finished at 9.30pm.

Chairman: Dated: