

# **SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES** of the Parish Council Annual Meeting, and Notes of the Annual Parish Meeting, held on May 20, 2019 at 7.30pm at the Village Hall

## **PRESENT**

Cllrs Penny Pearson, Stephen Wright, Sam Barrell, Will Caston Cook and Shaun Innes Whiting were present, together with five members of the public and the Clerk Rod Caird. District Cllr John Field was also present. County Cllr Kay Oakes had sent apologies.

### **1/200519 Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2019/20**

Cllr James Caston was elected Chair and Cllr Stephen Wright was elected Vice Chair, both unopposed. Elected councillors who were present completed Acceptance of Office forms.

### **2/200519 Apologies and approvals of absence**

Cllrs James Caston and Keith McKeown had sent apologies and their absence was approved

### **3/200519 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation**

None

### **4/200519 To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on April 3, 2019**

The Minutes were approved.

### **5/200519 To receive comments from members of the public on matters on the Agenda, and reports from the District Councillor and County Councillor**

Cllr Field noted that the new District Council is evenly divided between 17 Conservative and Independent Councillors on one side and 17 Liberal Democrat and Green Councillors on the other. Decisions will be made by the casting vote of the (Conservative) chair. The Green and Liberal Democrat group is concerned about the £25 million borrowed by the Council to invest in rental property (including some retail sites) and there are also concerns about the move of the Council headquarters from Needham Market to Ipswich. It is anticipated that the new draft Local Plan will go out to consultation again at the end of June. In answer to a question it was noted that rubbish collection delays are usually notified on the MSDC website.

### **6/200519 To receive and consider a Neighbourhood Watch report**

Written reports were presented to the meeting; Colin Burrows was unable to attend.

**7/200519 To consider updates on any planning issues**

There has been no change since the last meeting. It was noted that a new monitoring group has been established to keep track of SnOasis developments.

**8/200519 To consider arrangements for mowing of the playing fields**

The Clerk will contact Vertas and request that their invoice specify what work is done in each billing period; he will also emphasise that only the Parish Council or the Community Association can ask for work to be done.

**9/200519 To consider next steps on the VAS/Speed Indicator Device installation**

The Clerk will request a refund from Radarlux and will get quotes from Westcotec for suitable signs.

**10/200519 Financial report, including payments due, and approval of:**

- **The accounts of the Parish Council for 2018/19 (and the relevant annual return paperwork)**
- **The Standing Orders**
- **The Asset Register**
- **The Risk Assessment**
- **The updated Financial Regulations**
- **Adoption of appropriate Internal Controls as recommended by SALC**
- **Confirmation of the appointment of the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)**
- **Action points from the Internal Audit can be considered at a later meeting**

The Clerk was appointed Responsible Financial Officer for 2019/20. The Standing Orders, Risk Assessment, Asset Register, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct were approved and adopted. Internal Controls and the Internal Audit report were held over to the next meeting. The Certificate of Exemption was signed.

A bank reconciliation to date was presented, showing a balance of £17,650.91. £5,808.20 has been spent in the year to date against a budget of £19,748.

Payments were made: Rod Caird (Clerk pay, £339.60), Somersham PCC (mowing, £75), SALC (audit fee, £225.60), Vertas (mowing, £452.99). £3,258.50 was paid to PWLB on April 25 as a direct debit. £8,526 was received from MSDC as first instalment of the precept. Somersham Community Association paid £400 towards the cost of tree work undertaken by the Parish Council.

**11/200519 Urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council**

It was noted that the Suffolk Energy from Waste Facility is planning to increase its capacity by approximately 30,000 tonnes per year.

It was also noted that the Wheelie Day was very successful. A report would be presented to the next meeting.

## **NOTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**1 Apologies for Absence**

None

**2/3 Chairman's Welcome, introduction and report on 2018/19, followed by reports from village organisations and discussion on matters raised by members of the public**

Written reports were received from Somersham and District Community Association, St Mary's Church PCC, The Link newsletter, Somersham Baptist Church, and Neighbourhood Watch. All will be published on the Parish Council website.

It was agreed to put the question of Somersham Land Trust's current status on the next Agenda as there is concern about how to hand over from previous to new Trustees. Cash held will be paid into the Parish Council bank account for the time being and identified in the accounts as a separate fund.

**4 Date of Next Meeting**

May 2020, day to be confirmed.