



## **SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Somersham on  
**Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 at 7.30pm.**

### **Present:**

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

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk  
County Cllr Kay Oakes  
District Cllr John Field

### **SPC171/22/23 - APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS**

No apologies had been received.

Cllr Hallett reported that Cllr Whiting had resigned from the Parish Council due to personal reasons. Members wished to express their thanks to Cllr Whiting for all he had done on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Clerk would inform the District Council of his resignation.

### **SPC172/22/23 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None had been received.

### **SPC173/22/23 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**

None had been received.

### **SPC174/22/23 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2023**

**It was AGREED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **SPC175/22/23 – PUBLIC FORUM**

Three members of the public were present in relation to items 8 and 9 on the Agenda.

### **SPC176/22/23 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

County Cllr Oakes reported that her report would be circulated later in the week. It would be published on the village website in due course.

She had nothing further to report.

### **SPC177/22/23 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Cllr Field's report was circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website. He briefly went through his report, which contained the following items:

- Service Charges
- Tenancy
- Photo ID to vote in May
- Council Tax Freeze
- Council Housing
- Urgent Housing Needs

### **SPC178/22/23 – PLAY EQUIPMENT PROJECT**

Terry Fordham was present at the meeting to give an update on the project.

He stated that he had liaised with Josh Holmes at Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC) and they had confirmed that the project was entitled to a Capital Grant of up to £25,000 (or 40% of project cost). He had also provided guidance on the process and funding. District Cllr John Field would also help from his Locality Budget.

He confirmed that he had received two quotes so far and was expecting two more shortly. He felt that the project would cost in the region of £80k to £100k.

The scope of the project was likely to include the following:

- replacement of the trailblazer
- replacement of the roundabout and safety surfacing
- addition of a "statement" piece that was a multi-play type of equipment that would cater for as wide an age range as was feasible and be different to other play parks.
- a shelter for adults and children
- bridge safety gate
- possibly another smaller item to be decided from quoted options

He explained that the statement piece would be chosen following a consultation with the school children and local children of all ages.

When asked about the condition of the swings, Terry confirmed that the current swings were in good condition.

A discussion took place in relation to the District Council's CiL pot of money and how to access that.

**It was AGREED:** That the Clerk send relevant email contact information to Terry Fordham of who to contact further in relation to funding and also the link to the Application form for the CiL.

### **SPC179/22/23 - FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO FOOTBALL CLUB**

Barry Smith (Club Secretary) and Darren Luck (Treasurer) were present at the meeting to discuss funding for the refurbishment and future maintenance of the pitch/playing field.

A proposed Maintenance Plan from 'Pitch Power' had been previously shared with the Parish Council, which had options and suggestions on how to look after the pitch going forward.

Cllr Rook asked how many players and spectators at the Football Club lived in the village to which Darren explained that players and spectators were both from the village and outside of the village. He explained that over the years the numbers of village users had declined, but Barry Smith added that numbers were on the up including a Youth Team which was becoming popular.

Cllr Caston asked how far the Maintenance Plan would be taken as to the suggestions and options. He felt that the Irrigation route could be very costly and wouldn't look favourably at spraying weed killer on a public area.

Darren Luck explained that the Club wished to fertilise (weed and feed) the pitch on an annual basis.

Cllr Hallett suggested that some of the maintenance could be undertaken by Tom Hitchcock as he already maintained parts of the village and had the resources and equipment to carry out works to the pitch and that he be liaised with and ask for his view including other options to kill the weeds.

Darren Luck explained that using Tom Hitchcock might affect the grant funding applied for but he agreed to consider and look into Tom's services.

Members also expressed that they would look favourably to contribute financially to the upgrade of the Football Club's facilities.

They suggested that the Football Club also look into CiL funding with the District Council and that the Clerk send over contact details.

### **SPC180/22/23 - CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

a) **TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk had nothing to report other than what was on the Agenda.

b) **TO RECEIVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Clerk reported on the Council's current financial position and stated that the balance in the accounts as of 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023 was £90,458.48.

c) **TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS**

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Jan)	£294.85
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Jan)	£32.30

**It was AGREED:** That payments totaling £327.15 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

d) **BANK RECONCILIATION**

**It was AGREED:** That the Bank Reconciliation be approved.

e) **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

**It was AGREED:** That the Budget Monitoring Report be approved.

### **SPC181/22/23 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

None had been received.

### **SPC182/22/23 – PLANNING DECISIONS**

None had been received.

### **SPC183/22/23 – CIL REQUEST FROM SCHOOL**

**It was AGREED:** That this item be deferred to a future meeting.

### **SPC184/22/23 – CHRISTMAS TREE**

Cllr Rook proposed that a real Christmas Tree be planted on the grasses area at the front of Brooke Way to decorate each Christmas instead of using a temporary one each year.

**It was AGREED:** That Cllr Rook purchase a tree and plant it on the Green in front of Brooke Way.

### **SPC185/22/23 – 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT THROUGH VILLAGE**

Cllr Jousiffe recommended that due to three busy junctions onto Main Road, that a 20 mph speed limit be considered and applied for.

Cllr Oakes reported that unfortunately the road did not meet the criteria and there was no compelling evidence that a 20mph was needed therefore such an application would be costly and highly unlikely to be successful.

She did suggest that a speed survey could be arranged which she would be happy to fund from her budget. The results would show if there was a need for further road calming due to speeding.

Cllr Wright reported that a new battery was needed for the speed sign. **Clerk to action.**

**It was AGREED:** That Cllr Oakes arrange a speed survey to be undertaken on Main Road.

### **SPC186/22/23 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT**

The Neighborhood Watch report for December was circulated prior to the meeting, which showed the following information:

#### **October 2022:**

**Somersham** – two reports of anti-social behaviour, two reports of public order offences and three reports of violence.

**Offton** – two reports of vehicle crime, one report of drugs crime and one report of violence.

**Willisham** – No reported crimes

**Flowton** – No reported crimes

**Stowmarket** – 148 violence, 22 thefts, 43 public order offences and 32 criminal damage.

### **SPC187/22/23 – PROVISION OF GRIT BIN – CHAPEL LANE**

The Clerk circulated prior to the meeting a report/map which showed the grit bins in the village, which had been provided by Cllr Oakes.

Cllr Caston stated that he would check all the grit bins were in their correct locations.

**It was AGREED:** That the request by residents for a grit bin at the entrance to Chapel Lane be approved and the Clerk would apply to the Highways Department.

### **SPC188/22/23 – UPDATE ON COMMUNITY ORCHARD AND WILDFLOWER AREAS**

The Clerk reported she had received a response asking for more details from the landowner, but was awaiting an answer as to whether agreement would be given.

### **SPC189/22/23 – UPDATE ON REFURBISHMENT OF TELEPHONE BOX**

Cllr Jousiffe reported that he had started to take the flaking paint off the telephone box with a grinder, which was ongoing.

**SPC190/22/23 – REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED**

Cllr Wright reported that he had attended the AGM of the Duke of Marlborough. It was confirmed that for this financial year, the pub had just broken even.

Cllr Rook asked if the suggestion of merging the Pub and the Community Shop had been raised, to which Cllr Wright stated that he would raise it at the next meeting.

Cllr Caston reported that he had not been able to attend the Wheelie Day meeting, but a date at the start of July 2023 had been confirmed.

**SPC191/22/23 – MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

Cllr Wright asked for an update on the defibrillator – Cllr Caston confirmed that pads and battery would need to be replaced in the coming months, plus paediatric pads would also be purchased.

**SPC192/22/23 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**It was AGREED:** That the next meeting would be held at the Village Hall on Wednesday, 1<sup>ST</sup> March 2023.

The meeting finished at 9.22pm.

Chairman: ..... Dated: .....