



## **SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Somersham on  
**Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 7.30pm.**

### **Present:**

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

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

### **SPC001/23/24 - APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS**

Apologies had been received and approved from Cllr Caston and Cllr Rook.

### **SPC002/23/24 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None had been received.

### **SPC003/23/24 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**

None had been received.

### **SPC004/23/24 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2023**

**It was AGREED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **SPC005/23/24 – PUBLIC FORUM**

There was one member of the public present.  
No items were raised.

### **SPC006/23/24 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

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

Councillors asked about the traffic survey raised at a previous meeting.

Cllr Oakes stated that she would be happy to arrange the survey and fund it. She asked where the survey should be carried out.

**It was AGREED:** That the survey be carried out on Main Road between the bus stop and the Village Sign.

### **SPC007/23/24 – 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.

Councillors were interested in the CiL part of the report and a general discussion took place around CiL monies being spent and applied for.

Cllr Field explained that he would not be standing again at the Elections on 4<sup>th</sup> May. Councillors thanked John for all he had done for the Parish Council over the years and wished him well.

### **SPC008/23/24 – CLERK’S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

a) **TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S REPORT**

The Clerk reported that she had obtained all the remaining files and documents from the family of the previous Clerk and was currently going through it all, sorting it into archiving, recycling and disposal.

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 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023 was £89,698.93.

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

The Clerk reported that there were no payments to be authorized, but the following payments needed to be ratified:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Mar)	£294.85
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Mar)	£38.10
Jennie Blackburn	Laptop Maintenance Reimbursement	£24.00
HMRC	PAYE to 5th April	£63.60
SALC	Payroll to 31st March	£54.00

**It was AGREED:** That payments totaling £474.55 be ratified.

d) **ASSET REGISTER – 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2023**

Cllr Hallett suggested that the insurance value be raised for the Bus Stop and Village Sign as he felt that they were undervalued at the current time.

**It was AGREED:** That the Asset Register be approved for 2022/23.  
That the Clerk liaise with the insurance company to discuss raising the insurance value to £5,000 for both the Bus Stop and Village Sign. **Clerk to action**

e) **DONATION TO THE LINK MAGAZINE**

The Clerk reported that she had received an email in relation to a usual donation from the Parish Council to the Link Magazine, which had been missed during the changeover of Clerk. The last donation received was in July 2020 for £100.

**It was AGREED:** That a donation of £100 be made for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 totaling £300. **Clerk to action.**

### **SPC009/23/24 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

None had been received.

### **SPC010/23/24 – PLANNING DECISIONS**

The following planning decision was noted:

**Ref: DC/23/00052** - Householder Application - Conversion and extension of garage to form ancillary annexed accommodation (following demolition of conservatory) Offton Lodge, Main Road, Somersham – **Granted**

### **SPC011/23/24 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT**

The following information had been received:

#### **January 2023:**

**Somersham** – one report of burglary

**Offton** – one report of criminal damage and one case of violence

**Willisham** – No reported crimes

**Flowton** – No reported crimes

**Stowmarket** – 286 crimes = 126 violence, 29 thefts, 32 anti-social behaviour and 28 criminal damage.

#### **February 2023:**

**Somersham** – one report of burglary and one report of criminal damage

**Offton** – one report of criminal damage

**Willisham** – No reported crimes

**Flowton** – one report of criminal damage

**Stowmarket** – 240 crimes = 103 violence, 21 thefts, 25 anti-social behaviour and 18 burglary.

### **SPC012/23/24 – GREEN SPACES – FUNDING REQUEST**

An email had been received and forwarded to Councillors by the Clerk in relation to green spaces around Somersham from the Biodiversity Group. Wildflower areas around the parish were planned and therefore a request for funding had been received.

**It was AGREED:** That the Parish Council donate £100 towards the project. **Clerk to action.**

### **SPC013/23/24 – LETTER FROM BURSTALL PARISH COUNCIL – PLANNING PROCESS OF SOLAR FARMS**

**It was AGREED:** That the Parish Council would not join the neighbouring Councils in relation to the planning procedures and enforcement issues raised and the signing of a letter.  
**Cllr Hallett to inform Burstall Parish Council.**

### **SPC014/23/24 – QUOTES RECEIVED – MAINTENANCE OF PLAYING FIELD**

**It was AGREED:** That this item be deferred to the May meeting when Cllr Caston would be present to offer advice.

### **SPC015/23/24 – COMMUNITY ORCHARD**

Cllr Wright explained that a meeting had taken place with himself, the Clerk, the landowner and Lady Blakenham in relation to part of their land being used as a Community Orchard.

During the meeting the following questions had been raised:

- Who was going to be in charge of the project
- How would the land be accessed
- Would the school be involved
- Trees would need pruning, which would be a lot of work – who would carry out that work

The Clerk explained that should the Parish Council lead the project then a Lease would need to be drawn up between the landowner and the Parish Council. The cost could be in the region of £2,000.

**It was AGREED:** That the Clerk liaise with the District Council and County Council in relation to the possible donation of fruit trees and report back to a future meeting of the Parish Council.

**SPC016/23/24 – UPDATE ON REFURBISHMENT OF TELEPHONE BOX**

There was nothing to report.

**SPC017/23/24 – REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED**

Cllr Wright reported that whilst he had not attended the recent meeting of the Duke of Marlborough, he could report that the takings for January/February/March had risen by 20% on last year, which was very positive. He also reported that projects were being considered such as solar to help with energy costs.

**SPC018/23/24 – MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

- Resident had approached Cllr Field in relation to more trees being planted on the roundabout on Springfield Road.

**SPC019/23/24 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**It was AGREED:** That the next meeting would be held at the Village Hall on Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

The meeting finished at 8.35pm

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