



## **SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Somersham on  
**Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7.30pm.**

### **Present:**

Councillors: T Hallatt (Chair)  
J Rook  
J Caston  
S Wright

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk  
K Oakes – County Councillor  
A Marriott – District Councillor

### **SPC134/23/24 – APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Barrell and Cllr Jousiffe, which were approved.

### **SPC135/23/24 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Wright declared an interest in Item 9 on the Agenda (DC/23/05642).

### **SPC136/23/24 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**

None had been received.

### **SPC137/23/24 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**

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

### **SPC137/23/24 - PUBLIC FORUM**

One member of the public was present, Jenny Hitchcock. She explained to members that some areas of grass on the playing field had been left to grow long to encourage wildflowers to grow and for the wildlife. Those areas now needed to be cut. She asked if the Parish Council would be in agreement to pay for the works. Also, would they consider paying the fee in future years?

The Parish Council were happy to pay for the cut and asked the Clerk to liaise with Tom Hitchcock. In relation to paying for the works in future years a price would need to be agreed.

**It was AGREED:** That the Clerk confirm to Tom Hitchcock to cut the long areas of grass on the playing field.  
That the Clerk ask for a price for future cutting of those areas.

### **SPC138/23/24 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

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

She reported about the continual flooding in Barking and what was being done to rectify the issue, which was complex and difficult to carry out.

## SPC139/23/24 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

Cllr Marriott’s report was circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

She briefly went through her report which included the following subjects:

- Cosy Homes Initiative
- Rough Sleeping
- Cost of Living Help and Fuel Support
- ‘Living Well in Winter’ Grant
- Locality Awards Application
- National Grid’s Norwich to Tilbury Community Newsletter
- Rural Affordable Housing

## SPC140/23/24 – CLERK’S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

### a) TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S REPORT

The Clerk reported an email received from a resident who had asked about whether the Parish Council had considered a Neighbourhood Plan, to which members confirmed that one had been considered in the past. It was felt too expensive, very time consuming, professionals would need to be employed and the Plan would not necessary stop development in the area. For these reasons one was not pursued.

### 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 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 was £91,367.65.

### c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Nov)	£294.65
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Nov)	£40.80
T Hitchcock	Grass Cutting	£412.50
T Hitchcock	Grass Cutting	£133.75

**It was AGREED:** That payments totaling £881.70 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

No receipts had been received.

### d) DRAFT BUDGET 2024/25

The Clerk reported that the tax base had now been received and so the Draft Budget had been amended to show those figures.

**It was AGREED:** That the Draft Budget be approved.

## SPC141/23/24 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

**Ref: DC/23/05401** - APPLICATION FOR CONSENT TO CARRY OUT WORKS TO TREE(S) PROTECTED BY A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER - Application for works to Tree subject to Tree Preservation Order (MS280/T1) - Proposal to reduce Walnut Tree (T1) by 3 m all round - Duke Of Marlborough, Main Road, Somersham

**It was AGREED:** That the Parish Council had no objections to the application. **Clerk to action.**

**Ref: DC/23/05642** - Householder Application - Erection of a single storey rear extension - 11 Park Cottages, Flowton Road, Somersham

**It was AGREED:** That the Parish Council had no objections to the application. **Clerk to action.**

#### **SPC142/23/24 – PLANNING DECISIONS**

None had been received.

#### **SPC143/23/24 – DONATIONS – CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

Following an email received from the Citizen’s Advice Bureau (CAB), which reported that 13 people in the village had been supported for 70 issues by the CAB, members felt that a donation would be appropriate.

Cllr Wright proposed that £300 be donated, to which all members agreed.

**It was AGREED:** That a donation of £300 be made to the Citizen Advice Bureau. **Clerk to action.**

#### **SPC144/23/24 – EMERGENCY PLAN**

Cllr Rook briefly went through what was agreed at the last meeting where it was felt an Emergency Plan would be advantageous for any future flooding, power cuts etc in the village.

Cllr Caston explained that the District Council had a template of such a Plan should it be needed.

Cllr Hallatt stated that he would put a message out on social media asking for volunteers with skills in the village whose details could be listed in the Plan.

#### **SPC145/23/24 - COMMUNITY ORCHARD**

There was nothing to report.

#### **SPC146/23/24 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT**

There was nothing to report.

#### **SPC147/23/24 - REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED**

None had been attended.

#### **SPC148/23/24 – MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

- New Tenant had moved into the Duke of Marlborough pub. Existing staff remained.
- Christmas Tree donated and erected by Cllr Rook and family.

#### **SPC149/23/24 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**It was AGREED:** That the next meeting would be held at the Village Hall on **Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024.**

#### **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – Staffing Matter**

The meeting finished at 8.30pm.

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