



SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Somersham on **Wednesday, 7th June 2023 at 7.30pm.**

Present:

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

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk
District Cllr A Marriott

SPC047/23/24 – APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS

Apologies had been received and approved from Cllr Jousiffe, Cllr Rook and County Cllr Oakes.

SPC048/23/24 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Caston declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning item DC/23/02118.

SPC049/23/24 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

SPC050/23/24 - PUBLIC FORUM

There were 10 members of the public present, most of which were interested in the planning application DC/23/02306.

SPC051/23/24 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10TH MAY 2023

It was AGREED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th May 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

SPC052/23/24 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

County Cllr Oakes was not present at the meeting and a report had not yet been received.

SPC053/23/24 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

District Cllr Marriott was present and circulated her report. She advised of the information included in her report and how it may be useful for the community, such as the Bus Service consultation.

SPC054/23/34 – PLAY EQUIPMENT PROJECT

Terry Fordham was present at the meeting and gave a brief update on the Play Equipment project.

He stated that various applications had been made which included the Capital Grants (£25,000), the previous District Cllr's Locality Budget (£2,500) and he had also applied for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) pot of money held by the District Council (£75,000). He briefly went through the application process with Mid Suffolk's CiL Department and explained that he should be hearing very soon about passing the initial stage, which would then lead onto the application being heard at a committee meeting in July.

Following a survey with the village children, a Matrix 5 was the most in favour. This had various things to climb, crawl through etc and had seemed very popular. The company who had been chosen for the project was Wicksteed. Other items had also been chosen and quotes for those items would hopefully be received soon.

Terry added that the pieces of play equipment that were not being replaced would need some maintenance such as re-painting and re-surfacing had been quoted as £7,850.15 plus VAT. Wicksteed would also be able to do the repairs.

SPC055/23/24 – MAINTENANCE OF PLAYING FIELD

It was AGREED: That this item be deferred to the next meeting and an invitation be made for the Football Club to attend the meeting in order to give an update.

SPC056/23/24 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Ref: DC/23/02306 - Full Planning Application - Erection of 1No. self-build detached dwelling including ancillary cart-lodge and alterations to existing vehicular access Location: Land North of the Old Griffin, Main Road, Somersham

The applicant was present at the meeting and explained the application. He stated that it would be a single storey dwelling so would not be overlooking any adjacent property. The materials used would be the same as those used for the Griffin. The access would be the current access to The Griffin and parking and visitors parking would be provided. He added that the new-build would be his home and the Griffin would become a rental / holiday let. The new build would be a low impact property.

Members of the public were present and raised their concerns, which consisted of:

- Access – was not suitable for larger vehicles and concerns included the delivery vehicles of the materials
- Over development – the proposed property was extremely large
- Loss of Privacy
- Bank of the stream behind the cottages could be compromised by the extra traffic the development would create.

Concerns were also raised in relation to the yellow public notice which should be in the vicinity of the application for a required number of days. Also, some neighbours of the site had not received a letter.

Members discussed the proposal and it was felt that a site visit would be advantageous.

The Clerk explained that an extension would need to be sought in order for a site visit to take place and a further meeting to discuss and make a decision on the application.

It was AGREED: That the Clerk liaise with the Planning Officer to ask about the missing Public Site Notice and also to ask for an extension.

That a site visit take place in order for members to look fully at what was proposed, especially the access.

Ref: DC/23/02118 - Planning Application - Installation of renewable led energy generating station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage containers together with substation, inverter/transformer stations, site accesses, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements including Nature Areas ('Free Go' application following refusal of MSDC Ref: DC/20/05895) - Land To The South Of Church Farm, Somersham IP8 4PN And Land To The East Of The Channel, Burstall

Following a general discussion:

It was AGREED: That the Parish Council continued to OBJECT to the application as previously submitted. The reason for this was that the land in question was good quality agricultural land and should not be used for solar panels. **Clerk to action.**

Ref: DC/21/04711 - Planning Application - Change of use from agricultural land to solar farm and construction of a solar farm (up to 49.9MW) with associated grid connection cable route, infrastructure and planting - Land North of Tye Lane, Bramford, Suffolk, Reason(s) for re-consultation: Information received on 25.05.2023

Members discussed the application and had the following concerns:

- The land is good quality agricultural land
- Tye Lane is a designated 'Quiet Lane'
- The access is not suitable
- It would be urbanisation of a very rural area
- There would be a large impact on the adjacent cottages
- There would be a loss of visual amenity in relation to the Public Footpath through the site

It was AGREED: That the Parish Council continued to object to the application due to the above concerns. **Clerk to action.**

Ref: DC/23/02006 - Householder Application - Erection of stable block and tack room on concrete pad (retention of). Location: Valley Farm, Flowton Road, Flowton

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

SPC057/23/24 – PLANNING DECISIONS

None had been received.

SPC058/23/24 - CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported that she had been asked for an update on the CiL bids at the May meeting.

It was AGREED: That the Clerk invite Jennie Hutchinson and David Thorne to the next meeting for an update on quotations and information re the solar panels.

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 31st May 2023 was £96,345.49.

c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (May)	£294.85
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (May)	£32.30
Great Bricett PC	Ink Cartridges contribution	£117.24
Somersham Primary School	Contribution to outside area / storage	£3,500.00
Tom Hitchcock	Grass Cutting	£521.25

It was AGREED: That payments totaling £4,465.64 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

d) **BANK RECONCILIATION**

It was AGREED: That the Bank Reconciliation be approved.

SPC059/23/24 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

The following information had been received:

April 2023:

Somersham – 1 anti-social behaviour and 1 violence

Offton – 1 theft and 1 burglary

Willisham – No reported crimes

Flowton – No reported crimes

Stowmarket – 291 crimes = 114 violence, 22 burglary, 35 anti-social behaviour and 36 criminal damage.

SPC060/23/24 – COMMUNITY ORCHARD

There was nothing to report.

SPC061/23/24 - REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED

Cllr Caston reported that preparations for the Wheelie Day on 8th July were going well. He stated that there would be stalls, games, cars and all the usual food and drink and should be a very successful event.

SPC062/23/24 – MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

None had been attended.

SPC063/23/24 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED: That the next meeting would be held at the Village Hall on **Wednesday, 5th July 2023.**

The meeting finished at 9.22pm.

Chairman: Dated: