



SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Somersham on **Wednesday, 1st May 2024 at 7.48pm.**

Present:

Councillors: T Hallatt (Chair)
J Caston
J Rook
P Jousiffe
S Wright
R Hodson

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

SPC25/24/25 – ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Hallett declared the meeting open.

Cllr Caston proposed that Cllr Hallett be elected as Chair, which was seconded by Cllr Jousiffe. All Agreed. **Decision** – Cllr Hallett was duly elected Chair.

Cllr Hallett signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

SPC26/24/25 – ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

Cllr Wright proposed that Cllr Rook be elected as Vice-Chair, which was seconded by Cllr Jousiffe. All agreed. **Decision** – Cllr Rook was duly elected Vice-Chair.

SPC27/24/25 - APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE AND APPROVALS

Apologies had been received and approved from Cllr Barrell.

SPC28/24/25 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Caston declared an interest in item 16 on the Agenda.

SPC29/24/25 – APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

SPC30/24/25 – APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3rd APRIL 2024

It was AGREED: That the Minutes of the meetings held on 3rd April 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

SPC31/24/25 - PUBLIC FORUM

Seven members of the public were present. No matters other than what was on the Agenda were raised.

SPC32/24/25 – COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

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

Cllr Oakes briefly went through her report.

SPC33/24/25 – DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

Cllr Marriott went through her report, where she explained a bit more about her role and what committees and groups she had been involved in since her election as District Councillor.

Her report would be published on the village website.

SPC34/24/25 – 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 had circulated prior to the meeting the Council’s current financial position and the balance in the accounts as of 25th April 2024 was £83,538.76.

c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The following payments were to be authorised:-

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Apr)	£315.90
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Apr)	£40.58
Trevor Brown	Internal Auditor - 2023/24	£250.00
SALC	Membership Subscription 2024/25	£363.70
Great Bricett PC	Ink Cartridges Contribution	£131.00
Tom Hitchcock	Grass Cutting & Maintenance	£270.00

It was AGREED: That payments totaling £1,371.18 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

d) APPROVE CIL REPORT

It was AGREED: That the Cil Report be approved and signed by the Chair.

e) ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT - 2023/24

The Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24 was completed by the Council and signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

f) END OF YEAR 31ST MARCH 2024 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Statement of Accounts was presented for approval. **Decision** – approved and signed by the Chair and the Clerk

g) EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE – 2023/24

The Exemption Certificate was approved, completed and signed by the Chair and Clerk.

h) INTERNAL AUDITOR’S REPORT

The Internal Auditor’s Report was received and it was noted that no recommendations had been made.

i) TO APPROVE THE ASSET REGISTER

It was AGREED: That the Asset Register be approved.

SPC35/24/25 – APPOINTMENT OF OUTSIDE BODIES & ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

It was AGREED: That all Cllrs be representatives to the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) and that the annual subscription of £363.70 be paid.

That Cllr Caston be the representative for Wattisham.

SPC36/24/25 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Ref: DC/24/01928 - Full Planning Application - Erection of 1No. self build detached dwelling including ancillary cart-lodge and alterations to existing vehicular access (re-submission of refusal DC/23/02306) - Land North of The Old Griffin, Main Road, Somersham

During a brief discussion Members felt that the same concerns stated at the previous application remained, which were access issues and overdevelopment of the site.

The applicant was present and explained that various flood reports had been carried out and confirmed that the site would not flood. That was something the applicant could confirm as during recent storms the site indeed had not flooded.

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

SPC37/24/25 – PLANNING DECISIONS

None had been received.

SPC38/24/25 – REFURBISHMENT OF PAVILION

Following the approach from the Football Club and Community Association in relation to much needed refurbishment / rebuilding of the Pavilion, the Parish Council had been asked whether it could contribute towards the costs of professional fees for commencement of the project.

The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council could use CiL money towards professional fees should it wish to.

Cllr Caston felt that the Pavilion would benefit the most from a complete re-build to which Members agreed. He added that there were many funding pots available including solar projects money coming into the parish, which could be used.

Cllr Hallett confirmed that the funding would need to be applied for by the relevant groups as the Pavilion was not a Parish Council asset. He suggested that quotes be sought for architects and legal fees and for them to be brought back to the Parish Council at a future meeting.

SPC39/24/25 – RESURFACING OF TENNIS COURTS

Penny Pearson reported that the tennis courts were going to be cleaned and repainted, rather than resurfaced. One quote had been provided in the hope that the Parish Council could contribute.

Cllr Wright stated that he felt other sources of funding, such as the District Council's CiL, should contribute also rather than just the Parish Council.

Members asked that additional quotes be sought, then the request could be considered further.

SPC40/24/25 – RESURFACING OF FOOTPATHS 30, 31 AND 33

An email from Highways Rights of Way Team had been received in relation to the proposed resurfacing of footpaths 30, 31 and 33 in the parish. This was a condition of the planning application for the new housing development in the village that had taken place.

CLlr Caston, who owned the land on which the footpaths crossed informed members that whilst Highways had stated they had tried to contact the landowner, he had not received any communication on this matter.

The Rights of Way Team had stated that they had £35,278 to spend on the project and whilst the resurfacing of the footpaths was not now possible, he had asked for other suggested proposals for the village.

Members discussed possible options with the main one being improvement of the junction of Mill Lane and Main Road, the pinch point at Stocks Hill. Following works to install bollards had narrowed the pedestrian part of the road. That point of the road had become more dangerous to pedestrians where there was no pathway, especially pedestrians with prams.

It was AGREED: That the Clerk reply to the Rights of Way Team with the suggestion made above.

SPC41/24/25 - NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT

The following information had been received:

February 2024:

Somersham – 1 violence

Offton – 1 Anti-social Behaviour

Willisham – No reported crimes

Flowton – No reported crimes

Mid Suffolk South & West Area (Claydon and Copdock area) – 72 crimes = 40 violence, 6 Public Order, 7 criminal damage and 8 theft.

SPC42/24/25 – FLOODING UPDATE

There was nothing to report.

SPC43/24/25 - EMERGENCY PLAN UPDATE

The production of the Emergency Plan was ongoing.

SPC44/24/25 - COMMUNITY ORCHARD UPDATE

There was nothing to report.

SPC45/24/25 - REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS ON ANY MEETINGS ATTENDED

None had been attended.

SPC46/24/25 – MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

- Consultation of the National Grid's Proposed Pylon Scheme – Next Agenda

SPC47/24/25 – DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The following dates were noted for future meetings:

Wednesday, 5th June 2024
Wednesday, 3rd July 2024
Wednesday, 4th September 2024
Wednesday, 2nd October 2024
Wednesday, 6th November 2024
Wednesday, 4th December 2024
Wednesday, 8th January 2025
Wednesday, 5th February 2025
Wednesday, 5th March 2025

SPC48/24/25 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED: That the next meeting, the Annual Parish Council Meeting, would be held at the Village Hall on **Wednesday, 5TH June 2024.**

The meeting finished at 9.12pm.

Chairman: Dated: