**SOMERTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON**

**TUESDAY 10TH MAY 2016 IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT:

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| Cllr R Starling (Chairman) | Cllr D Van de Bulk (Vice Chairman) |
| Cllr J Clift  Cllr N Grayling  G Lack (clerk) | Cllr T Jones  Cllr B Barker |
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The Chairman welcomed one resident to the meeting together with PCSO Paul Edwards. Cllr D Crane sent her apologies, having had to leave the Annual Parish Council Meeting early. Borough Cllr Shirley Weymouth and County Cllr Jonathan Childs had also sent their apologies.

1. **Minutes of Previous meeting held on 5th May 2015.**

The minutes had previously been approved and signed at the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd July 2015.

1. **Matters arising from the Minutes not covered on the agenda**

No matters were raised.

1. **Somerton Parish Council Minutes and Accounts**

The minutes and accounts were presented to the meeting. No comments were noted.

1. **Statements and reports from representatives of voluntary organisations within the Parish:**

* Somerton “Poors” Trustees Minutes Book. Minutes and accounts were circulated. No comments were noted.
* Somerton Staithe & Boat Dyke Trustees Minute Book & Accounts and to receive Trustees Annual Report. Minutes and accounts were circulated. No comments were noted.
* Somerton Village Hall Accounts. Accounts were circulated. No comments were noted.

1. **Chairman’s Report**

The following points were noted:

* The Parish Council continued to meet every 2 months with additional ad hoc planning meetings;
* The Parish Council commented on a total of 8 planning applications during the year;
* The Broads Authority Conservation Area Review was still underway with the Parish Council having commented on the initial draft. The next stage of the process would include an opportunity for parishioners to meet with representatives from the Broads Authority in the Village Hall;
* It was hoped that a vehicle activated speed sign could be purchased using income from the Community Fund. However, it was noted that the sign had to be moved or shared with 2 other locations in the village to comply with County Council regulations;
* A solution had yet to be found to make the Council’s minute books/records more accessible and available for Parishioners. The Chairman noted that all minutes and agendas could now be found on the website. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for the extra work needed to update and maintain the website.
* Two litter picks had been organised during the year and thanks were given to the volunteers who had helped;
* Fortunately, there had been no reduction in fire service cover for the area following the review/consultation by the County Council. Thanks were given to County Cllr Jonathan Childs for his efforts on this particular matter plus his assistance to the Parish Council throughout the year;
* Standing Orders have been reviewed and updated but the procedures covering how the Parish Council operates remain the same;
* Thanks were given to Barrie Sharrock for his work as Internal Auditor which he does on an entirely voluntary basis which the Parish Council very much appreciates;
* Ross Bird has resumed grass cutting in the village although it was noted that cuts would be less frequent due to a reduction in funding from the Borough Council. It was hoped that the shortfall could be made up by voluntary input and contributions;
* The Parish Council had to increase the Parish part of the Council Tax for 2016/17 as the Borough Council, like other District Councils in Norfolk, had cut financial support for all Parish Councils. This resulted in a near 50% increase with a Band A property now paying £10.52p as opposed to £7.02p in 2015/16. The Chairman pointed out that Somerton was 8th from the bottom of the 21 villages in the Borough in terms of its Parish contribution.
* Disappointment was expressed over the failure to underground the overhead electricity cables despite funding having been in place;
* Continued monitoring of roadside drains in the village was necessary to prevent flooding;
* Finally, the Chairman thanked Borough Councillors for their assistance over the last year and Parish Councillors for their continued time and support.

1. **Vice Chairman’s Report**

The following points were noted:

* Everything was in good order including the war memorial, bus shelters, seat benches, Village sign, Parish notice board and the launching sign on the Staithe. Notwithstanding the overall satisfactory condition of all the Parish assets, it was noted that several of the benches needed small repairs, the Parish Notice Board needed revarnishing and the Staithe sign needed repainting and all benches would need to be oiled this coming year.

1. **Consideration of any resolution on which written notice has been given.** None given
2. **Members of the audience – questions on any item/subject.** Nothing noted.
3. **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 2nd May 2017 in the Village Hall at 7.00 p.m.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting 20.21.