

SOMERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Somerton Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 7 January 2025 at The Village Hall, Cottage Road, Somerton at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllrs J Clift (JC), K King (KK), D Shuker (DS), R Starling (RS), P Young (PY), and P Beard (PB).

Also present: Nicola Ledain (NL) – clerk, 8 members of the public.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Diane Crane and County Councillor James Bensly.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Young and Cllr Starling declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 (planning) as the trees overhang their property as neighbours to White House Farm. Cllr Starling declared a non-pecuniary interest as a neighbour to White House Farm.

3. Public Speaking

- A resident reported that there was a big pothole at the top of the hill by the school and one on Common Road. Cllr Starling informed that he had reported the pothole on the Winterton Road the previous week on the County Council's online reporting site.
- A member of the Village Hall Committee reported that with regards to item 7c, there was £215 ring fenced within the village hall accounts for the defibrillator
- The situation regarding access to Burnley Hall grounds for horse riding was raised again following the last meeting. Access around the back and off The Street would mean a safer ride which didn't involve the busy Winterton road. This would be raised until item 7.d.
- A resident suggested that a draft budget was considered by members of the public before it was a final version. The Chair reported that the draft budget for 2025-26 would be considered at the November meeting this year and publicised before a final version was agreed by the Council in January.2026.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5 November were agreed following a proposal by Cllr Starling and seconded by Cllr Clift, subject to the following amendment to be added at the end of the first paragraph under item 3. Public speaking:

At this point the Chairman informed that he had discussed the situation with one of the applicants. It was suggested that NALC should be consulted on the nomination process carried out by the Parish Council for Poors Trustees and that copies of the minutes pertaining to the relevant meetings be forwarded to NALC.

The clerk was also asked to check the website was up-to-date with regards to draft and final minutes.

5. Matters for reporting from previous meetings

a. Barclays and online banking

It was agreed that this item was taken under item financial regulations.

b. To consider an update regarding footpath number 8

Cllr King had received the document pack from Norfolk County Council which would be returned in due course.

With regards to the Mill Lane path, Cllr Starling reported that the relevant Norfolk County Council (NCC) officer had been replaced and has sent an email to confirm that the matter was in hand.

c. Lion Public House Somerton

The Chair reported that the public meeting organised on 2nd December 2024 and facilitated by the parish council was well attended. Mike Lees confirmed that an expression of interest had been submitted from Somerton VA Ltd (SVA) to Great Yarmouth Borough Council. It was explained that SVA was a not-for-profit organisation and the directors were Richard Walters, Steve Ashton, Mike Lees and Ian Hedges. It was agreed by the Council that the Chair should write to GYBC to express support of the submission. It was clarified that if the expression of interest was not accepted, there would not be an expression of interest made by the parish council.

d. Traffic concerns and possible solutions

It was still hoped that the Highway Engineer would visit the parish to discuss the concerns and the clerk would follow up.

e. FP5 The Street

It was hoped Sarah Price would visit the parish to advise regarding the chicane on FP5. The clerk would contact the councillors when this was arranged.

f. Cottage Road Name sign

The undergrowth has been cut back to allow the sign to be clearly seen. However, the sign is badly damaged and GYBC would be informed again that the sign needs replacing

g. Nuisance Lights

There had been no update from County Councillor James Bensly but the clerk would contact him.

6. Planning

The council considered the following applications:

- **06/24/0952 – Works to trees in Conservation Area – White House Farm, The Street, West Somerton NR29 4EA**

Following a proposal by Cllr Clift, seconded by Cllr King, the Council RESOLVED they had NO OBJECTIONS. It was noted that the application stated that the works were in Fleggburgh and GYBC would be notified of this.

- **BA/2024/0437/FUL - Hard standing area no more than 25m sq. -Land Between The Firs Staithe Road And Benjys House, New Road Track, West Somerton, Somerton, Norfolk,**
Following a proposal by Cllr Starling and seconded by Cllr King, the Council RESOLVED they had NO OBJECTIONS.

- **BA/2024/0452/EIA - Regulation 10 Consultation on Environmental Statement - Upper Thurne Integrated Drainage Improvements. Locations At Brograve, Catfield, Heigham Holmes, Horse Fen, Repps, Somerton North, Somerton South, Somerton Boat Dyke, Stubb Mill And Thurne**

Cllr Starling pointed out that no documentation was available on the BA planning portal but that he would circulate further information to Councillors after he again spoke with the Broads Authority.

7. Matters for reporting from previous meetings.

a. Action tracker

A short discussion was held regarding the use of the action tracker. Some council members had problems accessing it. It had initially been set up to prevent missing and forgetting any actions from meetings. The Chair suggested that action points to be listed at the bottom of minutes, Cllr Young proposed, Cllr Beard seconded. The Action Tracker would therefore be discontinued.

b. Parish Notice Board Refurbishment

The Chair reported that the varnish had degraded. Once the weather had improved, the varnish would be reapplied, and other repairs would be reviewed.

c. Defibrillator

Following a recent light failure on the defibrillator it was suggested that the defibrillator was moved to the Village Hall to allow more access to it if it needed attention. This was agreed.

d. Horse Riding

Cllr Beard reported that having spoken to the owner of Burnley Hall, he was not prepared to allow any more access to horse riders on the grounds as it would set a precedent for all. It was suggested by Cllr Starling that the parish council write to Burnley Hall to ask if they would allow access to residents to ride in order to join up with a bridleway and allow a safer off road route. This referred to Restricted Byway No.11 & 12 Somerton which ran behind on, the north side of, Burnley Hall and onto Winterton via Manor Farm Road and Low Road. Both of these could and were used by horse riders. It was also pointed out that the track east of Winterton Holmes Farm buildings, at the NE end of Somerton Foot Path No.9, joined Winterton Restricted Byway No.15 which could also be used by horse riders. Cllr Clift seconded and all agreed with one abstention. It was also suggested that extra signage on the Winterton Road to alert drivers to horse riders was placed and this would be raised with the highway engineer.

e. Grasscutting Contract

Having considered the quote for 2025, it was agreed that the contract be given to Ross Bird Gardening at a cost of £1890 for 14 grass cuts, monument hedge cut and footpaths kept tidy.

8. Financial matters

- a. The bank account balances were circulated. The balances as of 31 December 2024 were £8406.79 (Current Account) and £7973.58 (Deposit Account).
- b. The following payment was agreed:
 - i. Nicola Ledain – clerk salary December and January £414.78
- c. The budget for 2025/2026 was agreed. The precept for 2025/2026 was agreed at £6915 plus a concurrent amount for burial grounds of £760. The precept request would be submitted to GYBC.

9. Policies

- a. Financial regulations had been circulated to all councillors ahead of the meeting. It was suggested that the following wording should be added in item 6;
“should any urgent payments need to be paid between scheduled meetings, all councillors will be notified before the payment is made”. Following a proposal by Cllr King, seconded by Cllr Clift, this was agreed.
- b. The Sickness Absence policy would be deferred to the next meeting.
- c. The Planning Protocol had been circulated to all councillors before the meeting. After a proposal by Cllr Starling, seconded by Cllr Beard the policy was agreed. It would be placed on the website.

10. Highways Matters

- The damaged drain opposite Ivy House, Horsey Road would be reported to the Highway Engineer.
- It was suggested the police were contacted to ask if they could conduct a speed check on Horsey Road.

11. Correspondence

There had been no correspondence.

12. To receive items for the next agenda

Sickness absence policy, bus shelter, review action list, Hemsby footpath from Mill Lane SFP1 and the Hemsby missing link.

13. To note the date of next meetings: Tuesday 4 March 2025

Meeting finished at 8.56pm

- 5.c.** DS to write to GYBC
- 5.d.** and **5.e.** NL to follow up
- 5.f.** DS to contact GYBC re Cottage Rd sign
- 5.g.** NL to follow up
- 6.** RS to follow-up on Regulation 10 Consultation on Environmental Statement
- 7.b.** DS to refurbish notice board.
- 7.d.** DS to write to Burnley Hall re horse rider access
- 8.c.** NL to submit precept request
- 9.c.** NL to placed revised planning protocol on website
- 10.c** NL to contact police re speed check Horsey Rd