

SOMERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Somerton Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 8 July 2025 at The Village Hall, Cottage Road, Somerton at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllrs D Shuker (DS), R Starling (RS), P Young (PY), P Beard (PB), K King (KK) and D Crane (DC)

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

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Judy Clift.

2. Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Beard declared a personal interest in item 5.4 as she was employed by Burnley Hall.
- Cllr Shuker and Cllr Young declared a personal interest in item 8.4 as they owned an electric vehicle.

It was noted that Declarations of Interest forms should be reviewed each year and, if Councillors had any changes, the Borough Council must be informed.

3. Public Speaking

A resident raised the pot holes on Common Road. Another resident mentioned the repairs to the drain cover opposite Ivy House.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 6 May 2025 were agreed. Planning 10b : This referred to the installation of a pole at Somerton Hall and not the Collis Lane Communication mast.

5. Matters for reporting from previous meetings

1. Review Action List

The action list from the previous meeting minutes was reviewed. All actions that needed consideration were listed on the agenda.

2. **Carriageway Survey** : The Chair informed that the letter/email, agreed to be sent to the County Council at the last meeting, had not been sent because of confusion between himself and the Clerk. This was because the Parishioner who first raised this matter had contacted County Councillor J.Bensly. Cllr.Starling has circulated photos of the verge encroaching on two covers on the north side of the Somerton/Winterton road. Cllr.King informed the white lines had been moved on the road but there was not much change. Cllr.Starling quoted the Highways Boundary report which confirmed there was an issue with the hedge and verge adding that we agreed to send the letter and it should have been done. This was agreed and all Councillors will be copied in. Clerk informed that a request for a site meeting on this matter will be sent. Chair would also draft a letter to Burnley Hall suggesting that the hedge be cut back.

3. Footpaths Update No. 8 (Hundred Stream Path) and No. 1 (Winterton Road / High Barn Farm to Hemsby boundary)

- i. Footpath Number 8 – A sift through the council archives could now go ahead as keys had been found, It was agreed that this would happen on 15th July at 4pm. Evidence could then be sent to prove that a footpath existed.
- ii. Footpath Number 1 – The clerk had contacted Hemsby PC regarding reopening the section linked to Somerton footpath 1. They advised that it had been something that was discussed a few years ago and then nothing had happened. The clerk was asked to contact them again to advise them that it was up to them to ask for the section to be reopened ie for Hemsby PC to make an application to the County Council.

4. Somerton footpaths 9, 10 and 14 (North end of The Street to Restricted Byway 11) – a proposal to request Norfolk County Council modify the definitive map changing this right of way from foot only to a bridleway

Following previous conversations regarding horse riding around the above tracks on the Burnley Estate, it was reported that there had been no further communication from Burnley Hall. By changing the above footpaths from rights of way by foot only to bridleway status, it would allow horse riders to ride safely off the Winterton road. It was reported that many had been riding these paths for a while. There was also a suggestion that signage on the Winterton road generally could be improved. Cllr.King viewed that it was reasonable to permit horses to use the suggested loop but not the complete length of footpath 9. With 4 votes for and 2 abstentions, the council agreed to contact Norfolk County Council regarding bridleway status and Cllr Starling would contact them.

5. Lion Public House

A parishioner gave an update regarding the progress of Somerton Village Association (SVA) and the acquisition of Lion Public House. It was reported that a local developer had looked at the site with a view to changing it to residential use but had since decided that the property was not suitable for conversion. A small pub company also offered below asking price which had been refused. Plunketts have advised to set up a charity for the general benefit of the residents of Somerton which would be Somerton Community Benefits LTD. There was a long process with costs therefore applying for a grant of £750 from the community fund with more opportunities to apply for other grants becoming available in the future. They reported that the £100,000 mentioned in the Somerton News was in fact a pledge and not a donation. Cllr Starling viewed that the proposal was good but asked for confirmation on the 'asset lock' details stipulated in the Community Benefit Society rules. It was confirmed that this had not been considered.

The council agreed to take a recorded vote on the proposal by Cllr Beard to agree the grant, seconded by Cllr King.

Cllr Beard – for

Cllr Crane – against

Cllr King – for

Cllr Starling – against

Cllr Shuker – for

Cllr Young – for

With 4 votes for, and 2 votes against the proposal was carried.

At this point in the meeting, 5 members of the public left.

6. Replacement of Telecommunication pole on verge close to Collis Lane junction with Winterton Road - To request NCC to urgently inspect pole's distance from highway to establish any risk implications for traffic

The chair reported that it hadn't been reported despite being agreed at the last meeting, as this had been a misunderstanding over the issue. He advised that he would report citing that the location of the pole was the danger.

7. Replacement of Bus Stop bench seats

At the last meeting, it had been agreed to seek quotes for a bench at the bus stop on Winterton Road and the 'Mardlers' bench by the noticeboard. Having received suitable recyclable plastic replacement benches, the council agreed that they would rather have a wooden bench for the bus stop and possible solutions would be circulated by email so there would not be any further delay. Cllr.Starling informed that a Parishioner had offered to refurbish one of the seats this autumn. It was agreed to email Councillors to agree the design for the Winterton Road seat. Chair will look into the funding for bus shelters which could provide 80% funding.

8. Dog waste bin

Payment for the dog waste bin was approved and the council were awaiting delivery. Please include cost plus the monthly charge. The asset would be included on the Council's insurance. The colour would be green. The costs would be met from the Community Fund.

9. Police Check on Horsey Road

The police have been contacted about carrying out a speed check on Horsey Road following concerns about the speed of traffic and a response was still being awaited. This would be chased by the Clerk.

10. Horsey Road drain cover

Highways had been contacted regarding the Horsey Road drain cover and it had been acknowledged.

11. Road signs – Horsey Road / Winterton Road

This had not been acted. No new sign was needed for the Horsey Road but two new signs were needed for the Winterton Road, one near The Lion P.H. and one opposite at Primary House.

It was also reported that the Cottage Road sign had been damaged again and it was suggested that the council speak to the owner opposite the cottage road sign to see if it could be placed on their wall to prevent the sign getting damaged.

6. Policies Planning Policy Adherence.

The clerk was reminded to copy all councillors in to any responses to planning applications.

7. Planning Chair informed no applications had been received, however, Cllr.Starling informed there was one application on the Broads Authority website;

1. BA/2025/0172/APPCON | Details of Condition 3: window and door frame materials and large scale sections of permission BA/2023/0181/FUL | Home Farm House Horsey Road West Somerton, Norfolk NR29 4DW – It was agreed to respond noted.

8. Matters for consideration.

1. Archiving of council papers

Once the sift of the council papers had been carried out, the rest would be archived.

2. Litter picking dates

It was agreed that the next litter picking date would be held once the hedgerows had died down slightly. A provisional weekend of 25th / 26th October was agreed.

3. To consider an application for a grant from the community fund.

This was dealt with under item 5.5 – The Lion Public House.

4. Electric Vehicle Charging Point

The secretary of the village hall was in attendance to present the case for an electric vehicle charging point at the village hall. In order for a successful grant to be obtained, it would have to be applied for by the parish council. Therefore the application would need to be submitted by the parish council. It was noted that this would be an asset of the village hall and would be insured by their insurers, there would not be any liability on the parish council. The clerk was content with assisting the village hall committee to submit the application. Cllr Starling asked that any application be circulated to all Councillors and this was agreed by the Clerk. After a proposal by Cllr Young, seconded by Cllr King, the council agreed to assist the application process for the grant for an electric vehicle charging point.

At this point in the meeting, the council agreed to extend the meeting until 9.15pm to complete the items of business. Prop.Cllr Starling Sec.Cllr Beard

5. Somerton to Horsey Road – to request that Norfolk County Council pollard the roadside willow trees in Autumn / Winter

This was agreed and the clerk would contact Norfolk County Council.

6. War Memorial Rails and Lettering

It was suggested by Cllr Starling that the rails and lettering needed repainting to improve their appearance. Cllr Young volunteered to review the rails and Cllr King and Cllr Shuker would review the sign / lettering.

7. Light Pollution (Hembsy Based) – proposal to contact the Broads Authority to inform them of the Hembsy based pollution impacting Somerton and contravening the Broads Local Plan “Dark Skies” policy PODM27

Having been discussed at a previous meeting, it was agreed to contact Broads Authority to advise them that the night lights were still happening. The clerk would report them. Prop.Cllr Starling Sec.Cllr.Young

8. SAM2 Data reporting

Data would be presented to the council at the next meeting.

9. Financial matters.

1. The following payments were agreed:
 - i. Nicola Ledain – clerk salary April and May £414.78 (chq no. 200054)
 - ii. Ross Bird: £540 (chq no. 200055)
 - iii. HMRC Q1: (chq no. 200056)
2. It was reported that a VAT refund had been applied for of £14.78.

10. Highways Matters

Nothing was raised at the meeting

11. Correspondence

1. There was no correspondence to consider.

12. To receive items for the next agenda

SAM data The Cutting of Highways Verges,

13. To note the date of next meetings: Tuesday 2 September 2025

Chairman at this point informed that he felt unable to continue as Chairman and he would speak with the Vice Chair Cllr. Clift. regarding the next meeting in September.

Meeting finished at 9.15pm

