Somerleyton Ashby & Herringfleet Parish Council
Working Group considering the Parish Council's Digital Presence

Meeting held at 2pm on 30 July 2025 in Somerleyton Village Hall

Present: Simon Phillips, Parish Council Chair, Sue Read, Parish Clerk, Claire Diggins, Parish Councillor

Meeting purpose: To consider the Parish Council's digital presence and the implications of the new Assertion 10 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

Following the issue of the new guidance the Parish Council has received various emails suggesting that a gov.uk web address is a necessity, which is untrue. The PC must have an authority owned domain, which we do. The meeting discussed the merits of a gov.uk domain and felt that although this offers an endorsement of the PC's status it should remain a future action whilst the PC ensures it meets the accessibility regulations.

It is also necessary for the PC's email accounts to be hosted on an authority owned domain. SA&H PC has such email accounts for the Parish Clerk and the Chair. Best practice would be for all Parish Councillors to have PC hosted email accounts but after considering the amount of PC business conducted by email, the nature of that business (most of it is in the public domain in accordance with transparency regulations) and the requirements for Parish Councillors' mail-handling abilities the meeting concluded that this would be a disproportionate burden at this time but that the matter should be kept under review.

The accessibility of the website was considered. The website does not host video or audio files but some of the documents are in Word or Excel formats. It was agreed that all documents should be in pdf format in future to aid accessibility. Also, all images should have alternative text. SP, as webmaster, will implement this asap.

SP said that the website requires tidying and that the editor used by the design programme has changed so it will be necessary to re-edit all of the pages. He will undertake this in the next month or two – he probably will not complete this before the September PC meeting.

The PC will also need to consider its policies with regard to IT and accessibility. The gov.uk website has a draft IT policy, SP will examine this and revert with suggestions for policy amendments.

SP 02 Aug 2025