ASHBY, HERRINGFLEET AND SOMERLEYTON PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council, held on Thursday 5th March, 2026, commencing at 7.15pm in the Village Hall.

The Public Forum commenced at 7.15pm. There were two members of the Public in attendance, who were concerned about potholes on Station Road. The Chair advised that they enter this on the Suffolk Highways 'Reporting a Problem Tool'.

The Chair called for updates from Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council.

Councillor Robinson Suffolk County Council. Regarding the Elections in May; Boundaries are changing to 30 single councillor wards. K. Robinson will be standing in our Ward. There will be another Election next year 2027 to elect a shadow Council which will maintain services while the new structure is set in place. The shadow Council will hand over control to the new Authority/ies in 2028. The Mayoral elections for the combined Suffolk/Norfolk will run separately. The Meeting acknowledged, with a round of applause, the support received by The Parish Council and residents from our Suffolk County Councillors over the past years.

Councillor Ashdown East Suffolk Council. A new Grant for smaller communities will soon be available for larger scale projects. Grants between over 10k to 50k.

Applications will be accepted from April, when the formal announcement will be made. C. Ashdown has contacted Somerleyton Men's Shed who are seeking funding for electric supply.

Solar Farm PA is still in progress. He reminded the Meeting that the change of bins will take place later in the year. The cost of this was questioned by a member of the PC.

The Business Meeting of the Parish Council commenced at 7.30pm

In attendance were: D. Ainslie, C. Diggins, J. Foster, J. Griffith, N. Livingstone, R. Lindsay, I. Lomax, D. Owen, S. Phillips (In Chair,) C. Reynolds and S. Tull. Also in attendance were East Suffolk Councillor P. Ashdown and Suffolk County Councillors E. Back and K. Robinson.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** received from P. Johnson, who is unwell.
2. **Declarations of Interest** in items on the Agenda. None.
3. **Requests for Dispensation.** The Meeting will decide any requests for dispensation to participate in discussion and voting despite disclosable pecuniary interest(s). None.
4. **Minutes Of the Previous Meeting.** The Meeting approved, and the Chair signed, as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd January 2026 with two amendments. Proposed: D Owen, Seconded: DA. All in Favour.
5. **Clerk's Report on Ongoing Matters.**

7.1 The Post Office at The Forge Garage. The Clerk reported that she had visited the Post Office on 11th February.

The interior is much improved and was in the process of being cleaned at the time of the visit. The postal worker was happy with her surroundings and was helpful and friendly. The cleaner hoped that she may be offered the task of clearing up the exterior of the building. This would certainly be a great improvement.

6.2 The burst water pipe and pothole on the B1074 have been repaired, and the damaged hedge at 19 St. Margarets Cottages now has a fence behind it, so that the garden is secured.

6. **Requests from Parishioners.** No new requests.
7. **Parish Plan Working Groups.** The Meeting received the following reports from Working Groups

7.1 Defibrillator Group. Report received from C. Diggins. It is time to remind residents of the contact details for the Defibrillator, in an emergency. Is a fridge magnet best option or a leaflet drop with the details and a reminder to put the contact number on phones a better one? The general feeling was that the leaflet drop would be the better option.

7.2 Green and Environment Group. Report received from D. Owen. The Meeting noted the success of the Warm Hub Session.

7.3 Advice and Information & Infrastructure Group Report from S. Phillips. This focussed on the Play Equipment on The Green which is in need of repair. This has been highlighted by an independent organisation which assesses the equipment annually. S. Phillips has investigated the estimates of the cost of repair and replacement and reports as follows.

Estimated 'costs as follows:

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Columbus climbing frame full repair £4,111.00 ex VAT
Replacement seesaw installed £3,612.00 ex VAT
The Columbus repair includes remedial work to all of the support posts (9) and replacement of the platform at the top of the slide. Only one post is damaged at this time but timber play equipment on the Green has a history of rotting relatively quickly. It would be possible to repair only the platform at a cost of £988.80 ex VAT but any subsequent repair of the support posts would incur additional charges for transport, H&S assessments and waste disposal (£358.80 ex VAT).
The seesaw chosen as a replacement is timber, in accordance with the original specification that the play equipment on the Green should be of a rural appearance.
All of the play equipment on the Green is well used, especially after school.
Questions for the meeting:
1. Should the equipment be maintained or should it be removed as it deteriorates?
2. If to be maintained, which costs should be incurred at this time – Columbus part or full and/or seesaw?
3. How to fund this? The Meeting acknowledged the importance of maintaining this popular well used asset, and asked S. Phillips to investigate sources of funding.

7.4 Speed Awareness Group. An additional sign has been installed at the junction of Green Lane and Blundeston Road. This is a general hazard warning triangle without lettering with a separate Give Way instruction beneath it.

7.5 Monday Hub Group. The Meeting received the Report from C. Diggins, noting that the Monday Hub continues to be well attended, and that it is likely to be coming in well within budget.

8. Planning

8.1 Recent Applications.
The Meeting considered the following Application.
DC/26/0577/FUL
Site address: Playing Field, Station Road, Somerleyton, Suffolk.
Proposal: Extend the period of retention of the temporary changing facilities, storage containers and toilet block. To allow retention for a further 10 years. Some concern was expressed about the appearance and overall condition of the buildings. Despite this it was agreed that these facilities are essential for the members of Clubs who use the Playing Field. The Meeting agreed unanimously to Support the Application.
8.2 Recent Decisions.
There are none.
8.3 Solar Farm.
The Community Consultation event was held on Thursday 29th January; the Parish Council met the following day to agree its response. The Minutes of that Meeting and the Parish Council response sent to East Suffolk Planning are included with these papers.

9. Annual Parish Meeting. The Meeting agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on Thursday 21st May would follow the same format as in recent years. The Community Choir will be invited to sing at the end of the Meeting.

10. Village Events – Past None

11. Village Events – Forthcoming. The Meeting agreed that the Annual Litter Pick would take place on Sunday 22nd March, commencing at 10.00am from the Village Hall.

12. Disposal of Garden Waste and other Materials into The Jam. As agreed at the last Meeting, a notice has been placed in the Hexagon, reminding that the tipping of waste into The Jam is illegal. This will be reinforced by a notice on Somerleyton Together. The Somerleyton Estate Manager will be approached regarding a sign or a fixed boundary, which will aim to discourage the tipping of waste.

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13. Legal Name of Parish Council. Neither Suffolk County Council nor East Suffolk Council can explain why they have changed the name of the Parish Council from the settlements listed in alphabetical to order to having the largest settlement first followed by the other two in alphabetical order. The name change by these councils causes confusion and also means the Parish Council's name on its bank account is incorrect. S Phillips has informed the two superior councils that the name by which this Parish Council should be known will be decided at the AGM in May.

14. Digital Presence. S. Phillips confirmed that the Parish Council's Website now complies fully with regulations.

15. Finance. The Meeting agreed the Financial Risk Assessment and Management Plan for next Financial Year. (2026-2027). Proposer: C. Diggins; Seconder: N. Livingstone; All in favour.

16. Payments to be Approved. The meeting approved the following payments. Proposer: D. Ainslie; Seconder: N. Lomax. All in Favour

31/12	S. Read Salary 3rd Quarter	476.00
31/12	HMRC Clerk's Salary 3rd Quarter	119.00
06/01	SLCC Annual Subscription	84.00
21/01	C. Diggins Warm Hub Supplies	23.50
30/01	Sally Phillips Room Hire and Supplies for Young Artists Half Term Class	50.00
19/02	Claire Diggins Warm Hub Supplies	6.85
27/02	Clerk's Office Supplies for 2025-26 Printer Cartridge (08-04-25)	59.37
27/02	Clerk's Office Supplies for 2025-26 Printer Cartridge (05-11-25)	24.29

17. Correspondence. The Meeting noted the following items of correspondence.

26/01	Suffolk on Board	Bus Timetable Updates
26/01	info@sizewellc.com	Project update
26/01	ESCEP	Energy Projects Meeting in Yoxford
26/01	NPT&S	Subscriber News
08/02	info@suffolkcf.org.uk	Sizewellc Community Fund Newsletter
10/02	NPT&S	Training Events
10/02	Councillor Robinson SCC	January Newsletter
10/02	Scottish Power	Community Engagement Event
10/02	Lidgate Parish Council	Invitation to join Speed Awareness Event
10/02	ESC and SCC	Building Community Resilience
10/02	ESC Planning Policy	Planning Guidance for Infrastructure CIL doc
10/02	info@sizewellc.com	Sizewellc Community Fund
17/02	Keep Britain Tidy	Encouraging Community Litter Picks
17/02	NPT@S	Networking Events
17/02	Nexus Fostering	Seeking local Foster Carers
17/02	Broads Authority	Local Plan for the Broads – Submission
26/02	ESC	Funding Opportunities for cycle storage
26/02	NPT&S	Spring Seminar
26/02	PCC	Online Meet with PCC and Chief Constable
26/02	NPT&S	Subscriber News

18. Future Meetings:

Annual General Meeting: **Thursday 14th May at 7.15pm in Somerleyton Village Hall**

Annual Parish Meeting: **Thursday 21st May at 7.30pm in Somerleyton Village Hall**

There being no further Business, the Meeting ended at 8.47pm

Sue Read parish.clerk@ashvillages.org.uk 01502 450623

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Re Item 8.3

a) Minutes of the Meeting of the P.C Planning Committee held on Friday 30th January, Following the Public Consultation event on the proposed Solar Farm which contains:
b) Further Response of the Parish Council to East Suffolk Council's Planning Department regarding the development of a Solar Farm on land at Lound and Ashby.

a) **SOMERLEYTON ASHBY & HERRINGFLEET PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting 30th January 2026

The meeting commenced at 1930hrs.

Present: S Phillips (Chair), D Owen, C Diggins, R Lindsay, I Lomax & C Reynolds

Application DC/25/2853/FUL
Proposal: Construction, operation, maintenance and eventual decommissioning of a circa 30MW Solar Farm comprising the construction of solar panels mounted on metal frames, inverters, auxiliary transformer, substation, storage container, DNO substation, new access tracks, underground cabling, perimeter fencing with CCTV cameras and access gates, landscaping, temporary construction compound, and all ancillary grid infrastructure and associated site works.
Site address: Land at Ashby Dell, Border Lane, Somerleyton, Ashby and Herringfleet, Suffolk, NR32 5EE

The meeting was called to examine whether, in light of the applicant's community consultation the previous evening, the Parish Council wishes to amend its original response to the application.

The committee discussed the consultation event and the documents recently added to the planning portal. It was unanimously agreed that the previous response was satisfactory and that two further matters should be raised – the construction traffic management plan and wild deer.
The response sent to East Suffolk Council is attached and forms part of these minutes.
The meeting ended at 1955hrs.

b)

SOMERLEYTON ASHBY & HERRINGFLEET PARISH COUNCIL
Update to response to Planning Application
02 February 2026
DC/25/2853/FUL
Construction, operation, maintenance and eventual decommissioning of a circa 30MW Solar Farm comprising the construction of solar panels mounted on metal frames, inverters, auxiliary transformer, substation, storage container, DNO substation, new access tracks, underground cabling, perimeter fencing with CCTV cameras and access gates, landscaping, temporary construction compound, and all ancillary grid infrastructure and associated site works.
Land At Border Lane, Lound
Following the community consultation event held by the applicant on 30th January 2026 the Parish Council (PC) wishes to add to its initial response:
The PC believes it is inevitable that the verges of the traffic route between the junction of the B1074 and Blocka Road and the site entrance will be damaged by the passage of the construction traffic

and that the applicant should be required to make good this damage once the construction phase is complete or during the construction phase if deep ruts are caused. The route is narrow and will, at times, require the construction traffic to pass other vehicles which will involve either the hgv or the other vehicle mounting the verge. Particularly in wet weather, this will spread the verge material onto the roadway and may cause ruts in the verge immediately adjacent to the roadway.

The PC is concerned that the wellbeing of the local deer population should be considered. There is a small herd of white fallow deer which travels widely in the area roughly enclosed by St Olaves in the west, Fritton Lake to the north, the A47 to the east and the B1074 to the south. The development site is a key part of their transit route with many local residents reporting seeing them crossing the roads as the enter or exit the site. Also, there are a large number of muntjac deer within the development site and, while some may regard these as a pest, due regard should be had to their wellbeing both during and after construction.

The Parish Council recommends that this application should not be approved until:

1. Paragraph 5.9 of the updated Construction Traffic Management Plan is amended to include all of the roads and their verges from the junction of Blocka Road with the B1074 to the site (the full length of Blocka Road, Browston Lane from its junction with Blocka Road to its junction with Border Lane and Border Lane from its junction with Browston Lane to the site entrance).
2. Consideration is given to the well-being of the small herd of white fallow deer and the muntjac deer which travel through or inhabit the development site.