

**Minutes of the Meeting of Southoe and Midloe Parish Council
Held on Thursday 23 March 2026 at the Village Hall at 7.00 pm**

Present: Councillors: Chris Faux (Chairman) (CF), Barry Butler (BB), Alan Marnes (AM), Phil Nevard (PN) and Scott Wells (SW).

In attendance: 2 members of the public, District Cllr Martin Hassall (HDC) and Mr Ben Stoehr (Locum Clerk)

1. To receive apologies for absence and reasons for non-attendance

None received.

2. Declarations of Interest for Members

2.1 To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other interests, and the nature of those interests relating to items on the agenda

Cllr Marnes declared a non-pecuniary interest in any matters relating to the Church.

Cllrs Butler, Faux and Wells declared a pecuniary interest in the Village Hall as members of the Village Hall Committee and declared the existence of their dispensations.

2.2 To receive written requests for dispensations

None.

3. District and County Councillors' Reports

County Cllr Liam Beckett had given his apologies as he was attending a Development Control meeting.

District Cllr Martin Hassall's written report was noted, including:

- The Flood Resilience Group. The contact at the Environment Agency is Hannah Blanchard. The Environment Agency had funding available to assist with flood resilience, including up to £1,800 in levy funding for community equipment, plus up to £5,000 to install monitoring cameras. If a group is set up it can join the local flood group Chairs' quarterly meetings.
- £200,000 in Community Infrastructure Levy had been allocated for the Paxton Pits Visitor Experience Centre and up to £500,000 for St Neots Youth Centre.
- The Huntingdon Sports and Health Hub.
- Cllr Hassall reported on CIL and the percentages applicable according to whether a Neighbourhood Plan was in existence or not.
- The Grafham Water Management Transition. The agreement with the Wildlife Trust BCN is coming to an end in April and is being taken in-house.
- A question was asked about applying for CIL funding for the play area. It was felt that this was worth trying but there were no guarantees. It was necessary to make projects look original and not just like any other projects.

On a proposition by the Chairman, the order of business was varied to take items 13.4 and 7.3 next.

13.4 Flooding – update and to consider setting up a Flood Group

Cllr Marnes reported on correspondence from District Cllr Hassall.

RESOLVED that Cllr Marnes should contact Hannah Blanchard at the Environment Agency to progress forming a Flood Group. (Prop CF, 2nd BB, unanimous)

7.3 Local Government Reorganisation consultation

It was noted that HDC favoured Option E (Huntingdonshire alone).

District Cllr Hassall was not convinced about this option as the area was too small and currently loses £3M per year. He preferred Option C as the local area has greater affinity to Cambridge than Peterborough. CCC had voted for Option A. Option C was no longer on the table if HDC was voting for Option E, as this had no Local Authority support.

4. Open Forum for all for all members of the public present

None.

5. **To Approve the minutes of the last meeting**

Cllr Faux apologised to Cllr Marnes that he had misunderstood that Cllr Marnes had asked a question at the HDC meeting. Cllr Marnes accepted Cllr Faux's apology.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 5 February be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record. (Prop CF, 2nd BB, carried with 4 in favour and 1 against)

6. **Matters Arising from the last meeting**

6.1 **(10.4) Play inspection report**

Cllr Marnes reported that he had cleared the grate for this year but could not continue to do so in future.

6.2 **(11.2) Village Hall issues**

It was noted that the railings were still not installed at the Village Hall.

RESOLVED to ask the Village Hall for an update on the date for the installation of the railings.

7. **Planning**

7.1 **To consider any Planning application consultations received**

7.1.1 **24/00528/OHL - Old Bell House Great North Road - To facilitate a new connection it has become necessary to install a lame leg pole to support the upgrade of an existing pole mounted transformer**

RESOLVED that the Parish Council has no objections. (Prop CF, 2nd BB, unanimous)

7.2 **Planning/Local Plan issues**

None.

7.3 **Local Government Reorganisation consultation**

RESOLVED that the Parish Council prefers Option C as joining with Cambridge would be more beneficial compared to Peterborough. (Prop CF, 2nd BB, unanimous)

8. **Finance & Policy**

8.1 **To approve payment of bills**

RESOLVED, noting that a standing order needed to be set up for Then Media for £42.00 per month, that the payments below, as shown on the Finance Report, be paid, plus OLP (Play Inspection) £144.00, Gio Gardening (Grass cutting) £375.00, and RPM (Play area works) £288.00.

RESOLVED to send the invoices to Cllr Nevard and also four Then Media invoices from the last meeting.

Cambs ACRE	Affiliation Fee	£74.50
Then Media	Website and emails March (SO)	£42.00

8.2 **To consider any matter which is urgent because of risk or health and safety**

Cllr Marnes reported on the regular asset inspections.

RESOLVED that Cllr Faux should check the Cemetery and Churchyard and that Cllr Butler should check the play area.

RESOLVED to check and circulate the previous inspection report.

8.3 **IT Policy – to adopt a policy**

RESOLVED to adopt the IT policy as circulated. (Prop CF, 2nd AM, unanimous)

8.4 **Citizens Advice – Request for funding (grant application form not yet received)**

RESOLVED to note that the form had not been received.

9. **Highways Matters**

Cllr Marnes had reported several highways issues to CCC including drains, potholes, verges and kerbing.

He had attended an online meeting with CCC. Cllr Liam Beckett had hoped that Highways Officers would be in attendance but they were not present.

RESOLVED to approve the draft poster, agreed at the previous meeting, and the printing costs of approximately £60.00 for A5 copies, and that Cllr Faux should arrange

this.

10. Play Area and Playing Field

10.1 Petanque – update and to consider any quotes received

Cllr Wells reported on the quotations received.

RESOLVED that the best quote was for £4,800.00 plus VAT from NJ Kemp, as they had carried out a site visit whilst the other contractors, whilst cheaper, had not visited.

RESOLVED, given that the Parish Council had budgeted £2,000.00 plus £1,600.00 if there were no elections, as this could be re-allocated, that the resident should contact interested parties to see how much they were willing to contribute, and ask them to respond within two weeks.

RESOLVED to accept the quotation of £4,800.00 plus VAT from NJ Kemp, subject to the group contributing £1,200.00, but if this is not forthcoming, to defer this matter to next year pending receipt of more funding. (Prop SW, 2nd BB, unanimous)

10.2 Container Planning Permission update – to note response from HDC and consider the way forward

RESOLVED, noting that the Parish Council had asked HDC for guidance as to whether Planning Permission was required, but had not been told, to take no further action. (Prop CF, 2nd BB, unanimous)

10.3 HDC Active Lifestyles – Children’s School Holiday Sessions

RESOLVED to note that Cllr Butler had spoken to a supplier regarding all inclusive sessions, and that they would prepare a plan for consideration.

10.4 To consider a resident request to have a bouncy castle on the field by the play park for a birthday party on Saturday 16 May

RESOLVED to grant permission for a bouncy castle on the field by the play park subject to the resident providing details of their insurance and a risk assessment.

10.5 Football pitch – to discuss dates for line marking and appointment of contractor

RESOLVED, noting that it had been difficult to find contractors to quote, to consider a quotation from one contractor only in view of the difficulties.

RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Ground Tech East, and to add a small pitch for the younger children, for a maximum of £300.00 plus VAT in total.

It was noted that free compost had been ordered, which could be used to fill the rabbit holes.

11. Village Hall

11.1 Village Hall basketball hoops

There was no update.

12. Church and Burial Matters

12.1 Lych Gate maintenance and survey

RESOLVED that Cllr Marnes should seek quotations for preservative application.

12.2 To consider updating the Cemetery Regulations and Fees

RESOLVED, noting that the fees are similar to Paxton but higher than Buckden and Brampton, to keep the fees as they are.

It was noted that G Lendrum had withdrawn the offer to manage the wilding project.

A discussion took place about the Parish Council managing the project.

RESOLVED to contact the Parochial Church Council and ask whether anyone wished to oversee the wilding.

RESOLVED, subject to the outcome, to discuss maintenance with Gio Gardening.

13. Village Matters

13.1 Report from external meetings attended by Councillors

Cllr Marnes had attended a waste and recycling meeting and reported that food waste bins would be delivered shortly.

HDC now offer skip hire and borrowing of litter picking equipment.

Cllr Marnes also reported on a CCC meeting where Highways officers were expected. A meeting on AI, and meetings of the Great Ouse Valley Trust, CAPALC and ACRE were due shortly.

13.2 Green Bin recycling

RESOLVED to consult residents to assess the level of interest.

RESOLVED to ask for bins subject to the interest expressed, and that Cllr Faux should check the size of the bins provided by HDC.

13.3 Proposal that the Parish Council investigates the provision of allotments

RESOLVED to consult residents and that Cllr Faux should make the arrangements.

13.4 Flooding – update and to consider setting up a Flood Group

Taken earlier.

13.5 Tendering for the village maintenance contract

Taken earlier.

14. Councillors’ Questions

A question was asked about refurbishment of the metal sign. Cllr Wells reported that the contact was emigrating, and he would look into alternatives.

Cllr Wells suggested investigating picnic tables on the play area and the Petanque area.

RESOLVED that Cllr Wells should obtain quotes and look into grants available for the next meeting.

RESOLVED that Cllr Wells should look into bird spikes/scarers for the swings for the next meeting.

Cllr Wells observed that the speed hump needed to be reported to CCC.

Cllr Marnes reported on the 20 mph application. The deadline was at the end of the month.

RESOLVED that the plan provided by Cllr Marnes be scanned, circulated and added to the next agenda.

RESOLVED to circulate the sewage paper provided by Cllr Marnes.

Cllr Marnes observed that it was 25 years since the playing field was enclosed.

RESOLVED to discuss options at the next meeting.

15. Date of the next meeting and closure of meeting

The next meeting will take place on Monday 18 May at 7pm.

RESOLVED that a date for the Annual Parish Meeting be arranged.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at XXX pm.

SignedChairmandate.