

SOUTHOE & MIDLOE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 5 March 2025

At the Village Hall at 7pm

Present Alan Marnes (AM), Andy Kiley (AK), Barry Butler (BB) and Chris Faux (CF), Parish Councillors.
R Mimiene, the Clerk and RFO
HDC Cllr Martin Hassall
CCC Cllr Ken Billington and a new prospective CCC councillor Catherine Grigg
Canon Annette Reed, Rector Southoe Church
5 members of the public

MINUTES

The Chairman announced that the resignation notice has been received from the Clerk. Many thanks and praises for her dedication to work and community over 9 years has been expressed. She will be greatly missed.

03/509 To Receive Apologies and Reasons for Non-Attendance

Cllrs Angella Ellmer, Sharon Mitchel, and Scott Wells sent apologies and reasons for not attendance were noted.

03/510 Declarations of Interest for Members

To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other interests, and the nature of those interests relating to items on the agenda – None.

To receive written requests for the new Disclosable Pecuniary interest dispensations – None.

03/511 Code of Conduct issues – issues regarding the DPIs on HDC website were raised – it was explained that personal addresses can be redacted and therefore some Cllrs chose not to disclose that. All Cllrs are invited to review their DPIs and update once changes occur.

All Cllrs should attend training on Code of Conduct, lots training options can be found on CAPALC/ NALC websites. Action to **All**.

Council's Standing Orders, is a guidance to be followed.

03/512 To Elect a vice chairman – No proposals received. Carry forward to the next meeting.

Cllr AM gave apologies for the next meeting. Council will need to appoint a minute taker and elect a chair at that next meeting.

03/513 Parish Council structure – cloud / central storage was discussed and agreed to consider this for the future.

The Clerk will prepare the Agendas for the April meetings and Payments for Sanction. The Clerk has also arranged the Internal Auditor' visit.

03/514 District and County Councillors Reports

CC Cllr KB provided a verbal update. He explained that there is not much to say. There is no absolute clarity on how the future of HDC and CCC will look like and what the Unitary Authority will look like. Parish Councils might have more autonomy and more work. Further funds were allocated to repair pot holes but it was voted down. Cllr KB was asked about the St.Neots/LtPaxton bridges but there was no news as yet . Cllr KB expressed his thanks to the Clerk and wished her well.

CC Cllr KB introduced Catherine Grigg who is a CCC prospective Candidate standing for elections, she is here tonight to observe the meeting.

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HDC Cllr MH reported on the matter of the East West railway line and housing at south of St Neots which will affect the towns transport links more. He is working on flooding situation in Southoe and Buckden, failures in sewage system works, as reported at the last meeting, - sewage was being discharged into Diddington Brook many times. Meeting on Monday 10th March at 2pm at Millard Suite, Village Hall, Buckden is scheduled, with many authorities and everyone is welcome to join. Thanks to Cllr AM who has been chasing all these organisations over the years. Now they will all be at one table. Cllr MH thanked the Clerk for all the work done and wished her well. Cllr AM gave apologies as he will be at another meeting that day.

Cllr AM asked if any news re Call for Sites. HDC Cllr MH explained that HDC went into tilted balance. The number of houses to be built in Huntingdonshire has been raised significantly.

HDC Cllr MH explained that the Democratic Services at HDC are prepared to help the PC if they do not have enough Cllrs, they can offer help and encourage people.

Close of meeting

03/515 Open Forum for all for all members of the public present including

Members of the public can address the Council in an open surgery session. Each person wishing to address the council will be allowed to speak for a maximum of 3 minutes, subject to the Chairman's discretion. This part cannot be longer than 15 minutes.

None.

Re-opening of the meeting

03/516 To Receive and Approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 5 February 2025

HDC and CCC and CG left the meeting

Cllr CF sent additional thoughts towards the Minutes, he explained that much more was said at the meeting than it was minuted. The Clerk explained what the minutes should be like. He agreed that all what was written was accurate but not true reflection of who said what at the meeting.

Note since meeting:

Local Council Administration, 13th edition by Roger Taylor, Chapter 7 section 7.39 Meetings and procedures of a local council

*Minutes 'intended to be formal records of officials acts and decisions. Minutes should, therefore, be as short as is consistent with clarity accuracy. They **should not be a verbatim report nor be a record of discussions** or arguments made by councillors'.*

A specific comment to request to be minuted can be put it.

Proposal: Proposed by Cllr AK, seconded by Cllr AM, all in favour, one did not vote as was not present at the last meeting, it was RESOLVED that the minutes are true and correct record of the meeting. Carried.

03/517 Matters Arising from those Minutes

2 actions for completion from Feb PC:

- Communication to Charity Commission
- Letter for social media

03/518 Planning, Local Plan

03/518.1 HDC Housing Land Supply Update - Post Briefing Presentation Release, noted.

03/518.2 HDC Local Development Scheme 2025¹ - noted.

03/518.3 CCC consultation on their draft Local Validation List. A document shared with Councillors. The consultation closes on the 10 March 2025. – no actions agreed.

03/519 Neighbourhood plan situation – Wait till **Cllr SW** is present. What affect of the changes in CCC and HDC re-structuring, a question to be answered.

03/520 Walking, Cycling and Horse Riding Assessment (WCHAR) - Connection between Southoe and Little Paxton – new path at the gravel Pits still closed, but there are issues with flooding and signage. There is an objection to the current plan.

03/521 A1 – Report by **Cllr AM**: meeting was held by National Highways on 24th February. Speeding at 60 mile an hour zone and flooding on the southbound is still an issue. Southoe sign which fell down and was reported, still not repaired. The new local MP will be invited to attend the next meeting. Cutting trees at A1 – the NH team cut round everything else but left the problem trees in the middle, it will be worse than ever unless they are going to do something about it before the spring. Rubbish reported. Lt Paxton and Great North junction causing problems with new houses. Asked for the grass to be cut around the milestone which was not seen over the last 3 years. Everyone who spots an issue, please report online either via 'Fix my Street' or on National Highways website, this way the report will be logged on the system. Possible survey is going to be done in the next 5 years between Southoe and Buckden.

03/522 To Approve Risk Summary / Management (a copy circulated to Councillors)

Proposal: Proposed by Cllr BB, seconded by Cllr AK, all in favour, and it was RESOLVED that the Risk Summary is approved. Carried.

Clerk to send to the website.

Note since meeting: The document was updated, shared with Cllrs and sent to the website.

03/523 To approve new Model of Finance Regs issued by NALC

Cllrs explained that they need more time for this one. Agenda item for a future PC meeting.

03/524 Finance

03/524.1 To note Cashbook, Income against Expenditure report to Feb 2025 – noted.

Cllrs BB and CF offered to help to do the Budget.

03/524.2 Need for signatories to the payment process

Changes need to be made on NatWest bank – Cllrs AK and AM, and a volunteer who used to be a Cllr are the current signatories. PC agreed to aim to close x 2 accounts in May. When account was initially set up we had 3 out of 4 to sign cheques/documentation.

BoS – only 2 Cllrs left due to one resignation. Need another signatory. One set up and another authorise it. Cllr BB volunteers. **The Clerk** to action it.

Note since meeting: Application submitted to BoS on 6 March 2025.

03/524.3 To approve March 2025 payments:

We are awaiting for the Invoice from Hunts DC for the hedge works (carried out in December 2024) and there might be outstanding grass cutting invoice from last year as well (the Clerk has been chasing HDC accounts department for both).

Proposal: To pay Hunts DC for hedge works and any outstanding grass cutting Invoices so that the allocated Budget fund for 2024.25 could be used.

Agreed to pay as it comes in.

¹ HDC has published the Local Development Scheme 2025 following approval by the HDC Cabinet. Cabinet has given delegated power to the Chief Planning Officer and Planning Executive Councillor to take forward this important planning document.

Proposal: Proposed by Cllr BB, seconded by Cllr AM, all in favour, and it was RESOLVED to pay the invoices for the works carried out by HDC as listed above. Carried.

Date payment raised	Date de bitid	Income/Expenditure	Details	Chq/Sol/DD/Trans	Income	Total Expenditure	Balance	V.A. T.
March 2025								
05.03.2025		Wages	Wages including PAYE	BACS		1,069.48	27,697.03	
05.03.2025		Expenses	On running cost of PC	BACS		13.40	27,683.63	
05.03.2025		NEST	Pensions	DD		113.30	27,570.33	
05.03.2025		Southoe PCC	Grant S137	BACS		500.00	27,070.33	
05.03.2025		Savills	Rent in advance 29.3.25-28.9.25	BACS		500.00	26,570.33	
							26,570.33	
							26,570.33	
					0.00	2,196.18		0.00

Proposal: Proposed by Cllr BB, seconded by Cllr CF, all in favour, it was RESOLVED that the payments listed above are to be paid. Carried.

Cllr AK will authorize.

Internal Auditor visit set for Wed 12th March 2025.

03/525 Website maintenance - <https://southoeandmidloe.wixsite.com/website/the-parish-council>

.gov.uk domain: New guidance on GOV.UK – funding and charges

Consider a new website, May's Agenda item. **Cllr BB** agreed do a bit research before May's PC.

03/526 Policing in the village – No issues.

03/527 Village Defibrillator – a new volunteer. Cllr AE will show her what to do. Check with Cllr AE.

03/528 Highways matters:

03/528.1 Footpaths in the parish including Ouse Valley Path – no issues reported.

03/528.2 Trees in the village – no issues.

03/528.3 Streetlighting – to consider changing into solar lights – agreed not to proceed due to high costs. Contacted National Power – re electric bill not received. **The Clerk** to chase.

To sign the Maintenance Contract Renewal – agreed to email and seek a break down in cost. **The Clerk** to email.

Note since meeting: Clerk emailed the contractor on 6 March 2025.

03/528.4 PROW – no matters raised.

03/529 Village Grass cutting – No issues (Thurley close, and other areas in the village that HDC cut).

03/530 Play Area and Playing Field

03/530.1 The Play area development

1 Petanque – all received were in favour, 29 forms received. 175 houses in the parish, forms went to every house. Good engagement. Not PC run survey. Agreed not to use PC email address in the future. A group of interested individuals of who requested PC to take over at Feb PC, and PC agreed to that at the last meeting.

Email sent to the individuals who answered the questionnaire asking of any concerns were received.

PC received one query, which we answered, they confirmed they were not objecting this
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idea.

Ask the individuals re location and if they received any concerns, best to set a meeting with the interested people. Action **Cllr AM**.

Note:- since P.C. meeting, as suggested site meeting it proposed for 12th March at 5pm everyone welcome.

2 New equipment.

No changes.

03/530.2 Monthly visual checks, update

Done, and presented to PC.

03/530.3 The hedges around the playing field, playground and football pitch – quite expensive this year.

03/530.4 Playing fields and play area grass cutting contract for the next season: PC and PCC members meeting re the churchyard plans and cost – **Cllr BB** did research which was presented to the members. Discussion took place. Quotes were compared. The best option was agreed to be by our current contractor.

Current contractor for the churchyard / cemetery / ancillary areas, His fee would be £250 a month (football pitch and play park) approximately 15 cuts (£1750 pa.) Agreed to contract current contractor month to month basis to cut Playing Field and Play Area. His quote was most acceptable. Clerk to contact unsuccessful contractors.

It would be ideal and all agreed for PC to eventually have our own machine, will be upfront cost around £6,000 for the machine with a small container storage. Cllr BB explained that after reading PC Insurance policy, it is possible for volunteers to cut the grass as PC members as they are covered as individuals. Written record that operator's read the machinery manual is required. Maintenance contract of servicing which will be minimal at the start. Needs to be looked in more detail in the future. See if it is a viable option. Might be increase in insurance cost.

A good job done researching. Thank you to Cllr BB.

Proposal: To explore the long term of having our own machine and cost exercise. Agreed to look for machines long term. Cllr BB will get more info for next meeting Between now and possible new equipment current churchyard contractor be engaged on a rolling monthly basis .

Proposal: Proposed by Cllr BB, seconded by Cllr CF, all in favour, it was RESOLVED that this is the way forward. Carried.

Goalposts will need to be replaced in the next few years as they are deteriorating. They need painting and new nets. Consider applying for HDC grant, **Cllr BB**.

03/531 Village Hall update

Form submitted to the Charity Commission but no reply received yet. **Cllr BB** asked to see the form, **Cllr AM** said he will share it.

Note since meeting: The form was shared.

The Village Hall invited the PC to come to a meeting with ACRE. Details to be agreed.

03/532 Update on the Hub project – Canon Annette Reed, Rector Southoe Church is pleased with how things are going. Faculty application done. Redesign and permission of changes from PCC received. Approached Natural England re bats. The plan is to send a newsletter to the village to explain where they are.

03/533 Church & Burial Matters.

03/533.1 Closed churchyard – Canon Annette Reed, Rector Southoe Church reported that a letter was received on the 5th Feb re Order in Council – giving notice relating to burials in the parish. Notice went up in the church, it has been up for 4 weeks there. Canon Annette will write back saying notice period has now finished. Order will be made for

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the churchyard to be closed. Then PCC write to PC and ask PC to formally take on maintenance and work with the PCC on management issues.

03/533.2 Maintenance Stewardship program.

Cllr BB quote from 2024 £300 per month currently depending on time, growth and weather conditions, New quote would add extra £120 in total £420 including current works. Needs to be done at the right time and in the right areas.

George Lendrum explained that it was not his expectation nor intention for the fee to go up.

Thank you to George Lendrum and Cllr BB.

George Lendrum is happy to work with the contractor.

Proposal from **Cllr BB** for the 2024 contractor to do this for this coming year.

Proposal: Proposed by Cllr AM, seconded by Cllr BB, all in favour, it was RESOLVED to go with the current contractor. Carried.

03/534 Training - Training can be booked via: www.bookwhen.com/capalc

03/534.1 Funding Workshops, for Cambs Community Foundation funding, 1 Councillor is willing to attend (there is a £15 cancellation fee.)

Agreed to use Expense's form. Cllrs to claim expenses.

Canon Annette Reed, Rector Southoe Church left the meeting

2 members of the public left the meeting

03/535 To note Correspondence received (other than agenda items)

03/535.1 SLCC: Letter from Teversham Parish Council – agreed not to write a letter re understanding processes and documents

1 member of the public left the meeting

03/535.2 Dr Nik Johnson Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough re Bus Franchising in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – trying to get as much in house control over busses which hopefully works well.

03/535.3 The 10th Great British Spring Clean – can ask HDC for materials and arrange a litter pick in the village. Try to reengage with the community.

03/535.4 Latest newsletter from Great Ouse Valley Trust www.greatousevalleytrust.org.uk – noted.

03/535.5 Press Release - Council Budget 2025-26

03/536 Councillors' Questions

Please, note that no decisions can lawfully be made under this item. Business must be specified therefore the Council cannot lawfully raise matters for decision.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw, Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

03/537 Clerk's Annual Appraisal and hours

Need Notices that PC looking for a Clerk. Need a job advert, Cllr AM to contact HDC /CAPALC

03/538 Date of the Next Meeting: Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 2 April 2025 at 7pm and Annual Assembly at 7.30pm both in the Nave in St.Leonards building. Formal request to be sent to the P.C.C./Annette Read.

Meeting finished at 9.54pm

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