

**Minutes of the Meeting of Southoe and Midloe Parish Council
Held on Monday 1 September 2025 at the Nave of St Leonards at 7.30 pm**

Present: Councillors: Chris Faux (Chairman) (CF), Phil Nevard (PN) and S Wells (SW).

In attendance: 4 members of the public including George Lendrum and G Orlandi (The Council's grass cutting contractor), and Mr Ben Stoehr (Locum Clerk)

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

Apologies were received from Cllrs Marnes and Butler.

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

Cllrs Faux and Wells declared an interest as members of the Village Hall Committee.

3. District and County Councillors' Reports

The District Councillor's written report was noted.

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

A resident spoke about the Petanque court. There were over 30 people interested in the Petanque court but progress appeared to have halted. A location had been agreed but it now appeared that a representative from Petanque England was to come and assess the site. Cllr Faux explained the situation and the next steps. The location was being reconsidered due to flooding concerns in the current site. Cllr Wells reported that the outcome of a Sport England grant is awaited.

A resident reported speeding vehicles on Lees Lane. The Parish Council is considering a 20 mph speed limit later in the meeting.

On a proposition by the Chairman, the order of business was varied to take item 12.1 next.

12.1 Churchyard Maintenance

Cllr Faux reported that there had been some communications from members of the public about the state of the churchyard in the wilding areas.

George Lendrum explained that there were two separate wilding areas. In the last twelve months the churchyard has been officially closed and maintenance is the responsibility of the Parish Council. There was more sensitivity about the cemetery than the churchyard due to there being more recent graves there. It was understood that there were a few people that would like the area around their family graves maintained within the wilding area. There were only about six graves in the wilding area that would need maintenance.

George Lendrum explained that the project was not a PCC project and that he was not representing the PCC.

The Churchwarden explained the history to the closed churchyard and the PCC's understanding of the wilding project.

George Lendrum was happy to manage resident enquiries. A board explaining the project was needed.

The grass cutter was happy to maintain around the graves in the wilding areas of the churchyard.

It was noted that the area within the grave kerbing is the responsibility of the grave rights holders.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council will be the point of contact for enquiries and any enquiries that it cannot answer are to be forwarded to George Lendrum.

On the soil which has been removed for the trench, it was noted that soil had been put down as waste which growth will eventually come through. The PCC is waiting for the sewerage contractor who will use some of the mounds to complete their groundworks.

The Parish Council asked that the PCC inform the Parish Council when such works take place.

5. To Approve the minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the May meeting be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the July meeting be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

6. Matters Arising from the last meeting

None.

7. Planning

None received.

8. Finance & Policy

8.1 To approve payment of bills

RESOLVED that the invoices below be paid plus GT Rampley and Son (Container) £180.00.

Then Media	Website July 2025	£42.00
Then Media	Website August 2025	£42.00
CAPALC	Chairman Training	£50.00
CAPALC	Code of Conduct Training	£45.00
CAPALC	Affiliation Fee 25/26	£316.10
Zurich	Insurance	£996.87
Gio Gardening Services	Grasscutting	£300.00
Beancounter Bookkeeping	Internal Audit	£110.00

8.2 Shared Laptop Contribution

RESOLVED to make a contribution of £50.00 to Catworth Parish Council. (Prop CF, 2nd SW, unanimous)

8.3 Policy Review & Adoptions

It was agreed to adopt the new model Standing Orders and Financial Regulations with the existing options and limits.

8.4 Website Transfer

RESOLVED to note that this was ready to go and just needed files to be sent over before going live.

8.5 Appointment of internal auditor

RESOLVED to defer this item to a future meeting pending some options being obtained.

9. Highways Matters

9.1 Hedge cutting – Playing Field and Bell Lane

RESOLVED having considered a quotation from A Rampley, to accept the quotation of £250.00 for the playing field hedge and £250 for the Bell Lane hedge, to carry out two cuts of each for a total of £1000+VAT per year.

9.2 20mph speed limit

Concerns were expressed that any lower limit would not be enforced.

RESOLVED that Cllr Wells should investigate temporary speed enforcement options.

10. Play Area and Playing Field

10.1 Petanque update

Taken earlier in the public session. A proposal is awaited from Cllr Marnes.

10.2 Play equipment painting – Food and Drink Budget for volunteers

RESOLVED to approve expenditure of up to £350.00. (Prop CF, 2nd SW, unanimous)

10.3 Purchase a new strimmer - Ibbetts £218.33, ITS.co.uk - £224.99 and GHS £222.83

RESOLVED to purchase a new strimmer from Ibbetts at a cost of £218.33 plus PPE for a combined total of up to £300 (Prop CF, 2nd SW, unanimous)

10.4 Storage of Village Hall Marquees in the Container

RESOLVED in principle that the Village Hall marquees may be stored in the container. (Prop CF, 2nd PN, unanimous)

2.2 To receive written requests for the new Disclosable Pecuniary Interest dispensations

The written requests from Cllrs Faux, Butler and Wells were received and dispensations are granted to speak and vote to the Councillors as the Parish Council would be otherwise unable to transact its business. The dispensation are granted until the next elections in May 2026 and are only valid when required as long the Council would otherwise be unable to transact its business.

11. Village Hall

11.1 Village Hall grant application

RESOLVED to approve a grant of £480.00 towards utilities payments. (Prop CF, 2nd PN, unanimous)

13. Councillors' Questions

13.1 Village Hall deeds and Charity Commission

Cllr Faux asked if the grants process could be streamlined to allow the Parish Council to consider and approve recurring grant requests for more than one year if desired.

14. Date of the next meeting and closure of meeting

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

SignedChairmandate.