

SOUTH WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Assets Committee Meeting held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 4th March 2026 in the Parish Office Meeting Room.

- 1. Present:** Mr M Narborough (Chairman), Mrs M Albinson, Mr S Scales, Mr D Goddard, Mrs D Gotts, Mr H Hofmeister, Mrs T Banks, Mr P Bland, Mrs T Cornwell (Clerk) and Mrs M Kirby (Assistant Clerk).

Apologies: Mr R Williamson

2. To confirm the Minutes of the last Meeting held on 3rd December 2025:

Mr Narborough proposed that the minutes were a correct record of the meeting; this was seconded by Mr Scales, with two abstentions, all other members were in favour, and they were signed by the Chairman.

3. To record declarations of any Interests, personal or prejudicial: Mrs Banks declared an interest as she is an Allotment Tenant

4. To receive questions from the Public: None present

5. To discuss matters in relation to:

Allotments:

Update: Mr Narborough explained that he and Mrs Kirby had visited the Allotments last Friday morning to carry out an inspection.

He stated that the Allotments were generally in a reasonable condition considering the time of year, however, seven tenants had been written to requesting that they tidy their plots.

Mrs Banks enquired about the rules for controlled burning and suggested that the burning period at the Allotments be adjusted by one month to allow burning throughout March.

She stated that most Allotment Tenants have still not cleared woody material by the end of February and work to do this usually gets going in March when the weather improves and an extra month to burn waste, up until 31st March, would be helpful.

It was explained that this matter had been discussed in the past and members had voted against it as birds generally start to nest in March, that the weather can often be good and that neighbouring residents start to use their gardens for drying washing and generally being outdoors.

Mr Goddard asked if tenants usually compost their waste material.

Mrs Banks said that they did, however, this is woody material that is difficult to compost.

After further discussion, Mr Narborough commented that no other complaints regarding the rules had been received and members agreed that things should be left as they are.

Request for Dogs to be allowed on the Allotments – Letter from Allotment Tenant: Mrs Cornwell explained that an Allotment Tenant had been in touch enquiring whether dogs are allowed on the Allotments.

It was said that the tenant has recently rescued two spaniels and felt that if she could take her dogs to the Allotments, she would be able to get more work done.

Members referred to the Allotment Rules and noted that no animals are allowed on the Allotments, including dogs, rabbits, chickens, and bees.

Concerns were made regarding dog mess being left on Plots and dogs generally being out of control and allowed to roam from Plot to Plot.

Mrs Banks stated that she could not see a problem if the dogs were kept on a lead.

After further discussion, **Mr Hofmeister proposed that the Allotment Rules should be kept as they are and that no dogs should be allowed on the Allotments, this was seconded by Mr Narborough with one abstention, all other members were in favour.**

New Water Tank: A replacement Water Tank for siting at Plot 11B has been ordered and delivered, this will be installed in the next week or so and the Water supply will be turned back on.

Village Hall:

Quotes for Heating in the Village Hall Toilets: Mrs Cornwell informed members that following the last meeting she had obtained three quotes for heating in the Village Hall Toilets as follows:

C P Cooper	- £4,124.00 +VAT
Gaswise	- £2,810.00 +VAT
Hall Heating & Plumbing	- £2,268.00 Inc VAT

Mrs Cornwell confirmed that all three quotes were for the same specification; low surface temperature radiators.

She added that each company had also been provided with a copy of our Asbestos Management Plan as small traces of white asbestos had been found in the ceiling tiles, however, each company had acknowledged that any risk is minimal and the issue would not affect the quotes.

Members discussed the quotes and felt that Hall Heating & Plumbing is the most competitive price and are very local, situated on Hall Lane, **Mrs Gotts proposed that the Parish Council ask Hall Heating & Plumbing to carry out the work to install heating in the Village Hall Toilets, at a cost of £2,268.00 Including VAT, this was seconded by Mr Hofmeister with all members in favour.**

Review of the Village Hall Hire Charges: Mrs Cornwell explained that Mrs Kirby had contacted several other local Village Halls and Community Centres regarding their current Hire Charges and a comparison sheet had been produced and circulated to all members.

Mrs Cornwell stated that she had compared the charges particularly with Reffley's larger Community Hall as that venue is the most similar to our Village Hall.

She went through the comparison sheet highlighting any slight increases that she had recommended for adjustment and said that most fees had been increased by £1.00 per hour, with a £2.00 per hour increase for the hire of the Parish Office Meeting Room.

She added that two groups, the Pre-School and the Lavender Hill Mob Charity have a special discounted rate and again, she felt that a £1.00 increase to these was not unreasonable.

Members commented that the Village Hall and the Parish Office Meeting Room are great facilities for people to hire and use and with the increases in Utility Bills our costs need to be covered without the risk of losing our regular hirers.

Mrs Cornwell suggested that the fees should be increased from 1st April 2026, with the two groups on a special discounted rate being allowed an extension until 1st September 2026, allowing them time to budget for the rise in cost.

After further discussion, it was agreed that the recommendations highlighted in red on the comparison sheet were comparable and fair. **Mr Narborough proposed that the Parish Council adopts the recommended adjustments to the Village Hall and Parish Office Meeting Room charges with effect from 1st April 2026, this was seconded by Mr Scales with all members in favour.**

Mr Narborough proposed that the Parish Council accepts that the new special discounted rate (an extra £1.00 per hour) for the Pre-School and the Lavender Hill Mob Charity, should be adopted and take affect from 1st

September 2026, this was seconded by Mr Goddard with all members in favour.

Mr Goddard asked whether the Parish Council makes a charge for the use of the Projection equipment in the Village Hall.

It was explained that this had been discussed in the past and voted against, however, an additional charge is now made for setting up the Hall and use of the Stage.

The Green and Open Spaces:

Pond Dredging Update (CIL Funds): Mr Narborough stated that the work to dredge the Pond has been completed and the contractors had carried out a great job.

The various items of machinery and the protective planks of wood have started to be removed.

The next stage will be to wait for the silt to dry out and then this will be spread out over the surface of the Green and seeded.

Comment was made that there was very little rubbish removed from the Pond which was good.

Mrs Cornwell said that the contractors have done a good job trying to keep the area clean and when the job is entirely finished, an inspection will take place to discuss the possibility of additional plainings for the track.

Mr Narborough was pleased to report that there had been no complaints received from residents throughout the work and explained that in the future it will be nice to see some additional seating and picnic benches installed, this will be discussed at the next Assets Committee meeting.

Bus Shelters – (CIL Funds) Outside Acadia House, Grimston Road – Update: Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding the proposed new Bus Shelter for outside Acadia House on Grimston Road and explained that the preferred Contractor has been selected to lay the concrete pad.

The Contractor is liaising with Able Engineering, the Bus Shelter manufacturer and everything is in hand.

Members commented that it will be nice to see the job complete, with the Bus Shelter being of benefit to residents.

Grass Cutting Contract: Mrs Cornwell informed members that since the last meeting she had obtained three quotes for the Grass Cutting Contract which had been circulated to all members

For a three-year Contract, with the same specification for each, the quotes were as follows:

Norse	- £27,348.33 +VAT
Glover Group	- £31,260.96 +VAT
Nurture (A quote for one year has been received at	- £14,041.79 +VAT
A three-year quote was requested but has not been received)	

Mrs Cornwell confirmed that the current contract is with Nurture Landscapes, however, they have only been able to provide a quote for one year.

She explained however, that issues have been experienced with them lately as they have struggled to carry out certain jobs on time such as the hedge cutting and problems have been seen with invoicing.

Comment was made that Norse may come with difficulties as they are based in Norwich and owned by the County Council, it was felt that with potential changes with Unitary Authorities, there may be uncertainties in the future.

Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding the quote from Glover Group and said that whilst this had come in at a slightly higher price than Norse, their team have worked in the Parish before, they are reliable and we have a good rapport with them.

Mr Goddard acknowledged the point and asked if Glover Group may be able to offer any sort of discount if we selected them.

Mrs Cornwell stated that she could ask.

It was said that the current Grass Cutting Contract expires in May 2026, so something will need to be in place before then, Mrs Cornwell added that following advice from Amanda Driver, the Borough Council's CIL Officer, Grass Maintenance costs can now be paid for via the Parish Council's CIL Funds as long as it is placed under the Open Spaces heading on the appropriate CIL Form, saving the Parish Council a large amount of money.

After further discussion, **Mrs Banks proposed that Glover Group be asked for a discount and that the Parish Council ask them to carry out the Grass Cutting Contract for the next three years starting in May 2026, this was seconded by Mr Goddard with all members in favour.**

(Clerk's Note: Glover Group have agreed to a small discount reducing their quote for the three-year Contract to £30,212.74 +VAT).

Common Lane Potholes: Mr Narborough spoke regarding the road across the Green and explained that several potholes have formed, particularly at the sides of the road and on the hump edges.

Mrs Cornwell stated that quotes to repair the road are currently being obtained and members were happy that once these are received, Mr Scales, Mr Bland and Mr Narborough can consider them and select a Contractor to do the work.

Cemetery:

St Mary's Church Wall Repairs - Ongoing: Mrs Cornwell confirmed that work is continuing to take place on the renovation of the Church Wall and things are looking good.

Mrs Cornwell confirmed that the cost of the work is being paid for via Parish Council CIL funds.

All members were happy.

Proposal for Pergola in Cemetery – Plans and Ball Park Costing: Mrs Cornwell referred members to the circulated plans and information for the proposed Pergola and said that D & E Builders had submitted a quote as per the agreed specification for £49,982.00 +VAT to carry out the work.

It was said that in addition to this there may be a requirement to deal with the surface water discharge by installation of a soakaway or connection to the Parish Office drainage system, which will come at an additional cost, further enquiries regarding this will be made with the Borough Council's Planning Department.

Members discussed the Pergola at length and whilst it was acknowledged that the specification for the Pergola was of good quality and the slate roof would require no maintenance, it would come at a considerable cost.

It was said that with the addition of the possible soakaway / drainage and the associated Planning Fees the final cost of the project would be in excess of £50,000.

Mrs Banks asked if any other quotes had been received.

Mrs Cornwell stated that now she has the agreed specification for the Pergola, she would need to obtain additional quotes for consideration.

Mrs Gotts stated that she was against the Project and Mr Bland felt that the money could be better used towards upgrading the Lighting within the Parish. It was said that the Pergola is not good value for money.

Concerns were made that whilst CIL Funds would be used for the Project, CIL money will not be here forever and should be spent wisely.

Mr Goddard said that if the Parish Council wishes to proceed with the Project, it should do it now while CIL money is available.

After further discussion, members agreed that further quotes should be obtained as per the agreed specification and that enquiries should be made regarding the cost of obtaining Planning Permission and the cost of the relevant surface water drainage.

Mrs Cornwell stated that she would obtain the additional quotes and make further enquiries.

Cemetery Bank Removal, New Fencing and Hedging: Mr Narborough spoke regarding the area of land to be gifted to the Parish Council as additional Cemetery land from the Persimmon Homes / Lavender Fields estate and explained that once it becomes under formal Parish Council ownership, we will need to discuss how we would like to fence the area, seed it and make it nice.

He added that it is a large area of land and Mrs Cornwell circulated some images of a post and rail type fence and hedging which could be considered.

Mr Goddard asked whether the land to be gifted would be fenced by the Developers.

Mrs Cornwell stated that she was unsure.

Members went on to discuss the Cemetery Bank and Mrs Cornwell explained that after inspection, it was felt that the width of the Bank could accommodate seven full Burial Plots with at least fourteen rows (98 Burial Spaces).

It was said that the removal of the Cemetery Bank would increase the Cemetery Space considerably and from a Health and Safety point of view, would make the whole area open and visible.

Mr Goddard suggested that it may be a good time to ask if the Developers would be willing to assist with its removal and the levelling of the area while they have their plant machinery on site.

Mr Narborough commented that he does have concerns and reservations about the Cemetery Bank removal as the new residents at Lavender Fields will find themselves overlooking the Cemetery.

It was said that if new Boundary Fencing and Hedging is installed, then the view would be similar, and the impact would be minimal.

Mrs Banks felt that the idea does make sense and the Parish Council should make further enquiries into doing it.

With all members happy, it was agreed that the matter should be discussed again at the next meeting when further information will be available.

New Cemetery Tree Planting: Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding the suggestion of Tree Planting within the Cemetery and said that the Parish Council must be mindful of tree roots impacting on Cemetery Burial Plots.

She suggested that a single tree set in the middle of the Cross Driveway may be nice with circular seating around.

Members liked the idea but thought that the Cemetery Bank should be removed in the first instance then a Landscape Gardener could be consulted / employed to come up with a formal design for the whole area.

Members agreed to revisit the idea at a future meeting.

CIL:

Possible CIL Suggestions: Mr Hofmeister stated that he would like to see the South side of the new Bin Store screened with hedging.

Several species of suitable plants were suggested including Cotoneaster and Honeysuckle.

Mrs Banks suggested that a beautiful blue flowering plant called Ceanothus should be considered, it was said that this plant is evergreen and is attractive to bees.

All members were happy with the idea and felt that suitable hedging should be planted to screen the Bin Store.

Replacement of Lighting Columns – Next Phase Update: Mrs Cornwell explained that the Replacement of the Lighting Columns within the Parish is ongoing with the next areas to be updated being Meadow Road, Bracken Road, Greenacres Close, St Mary's Close, Hall Lane and The Boltons, with payments to UK Power Networks already paid.

Additional Lighting Columns for Bracken Road and Meadow Road: Mrs Cornwell stated that following consultation with residents, the idea of additional Lighting Columns in Meadow Road has been abandoned as residents have said they do not want them, however, after a site visit, two additional Lighting Columns have been quoted for at Bracken Road, at a cost of £8,188.00 (UK Power Networks costs) plus £1,623.00 (K & M Lighting Services costs).

After discussion, **Mr Bland proposed that the Parish Council goes ahead with the installation of two additional Lighting Columns at Bracken Road at a cost of £8,188.00 (UK Power Networks costs) plus £1,623.00 (K & M Lighting Services costs), this was seconded by Mr Scales with all members in favour.**

Additional Lighting Columns for Avon Road Cycle path: Mrs Cornwell stated that following investigations into an additional Lighting Column at the Avon Road Cycle path a quote has now been received in excess of £20,000.00 (UK Power Networks costs) plus £1,000.00 (K & M Lighting Services costs).

Whilst members agreed that additional lighting at the Avon Road Cycle path would be beneficial, the work was too costly, and the idea should be abandoned and no longer pursued.

Additional Lighting Column for the Footpath between Castle Rising Road and Priory Lane: Mrs Cornwell stated that following investigations into an additional Lighting Column at Priory Lane, a quote has now been received at £9,233.00 (UK Power Networks costs) plus £811.00 (K & M Lighting Services costs).

Comment was made that the area would be brighter if the residents living at Pretoria Grove would cut back the overgrowing foliage from their gardens. It was said that letters to residents requesting this were sent in January 2026.

After further discussion, **Mrs Banks proposed that the Parish Council goes ahead with the installation of an additional Lighting Column at Priory Lane near to the junction with Pretoria Grove at a cost of £9,233.00 (UK Power Networks costs) plus £811.00 (K & M Lighting Services costs), this was seconded by Mr Hofmeister, with three members against the proposal and all other members in favour, the proposal was carried.**

Members asked if prior to the full Parish Council meeting, K & M Lighting Services could be asked if there is any way that the existing Lighting could be made brighter in this location.

(Clerk's Note: K & M Lighting Services have stated that they could change the old lantern for a higher wattage LED which would brighten the area, but with the trees overhanging the fence that would still obstruct the light, the brighter LED lantern would cost £230.00 excluding VAT).

It was also suggested that the NCC Highways Engineer may be able to send letters to the residents of Pretoria Grove requesting that they cut back the foliage from their gardens which is overhanging the Footpath and obscuring the Lighting. (Clerk's Note: The NCC Highways Engineer has sent letters to the residents of Pretoria Grove requesting that work to cut back the foliage is carried out within the next 14 days).

New Proposed Footpath for between Castle Rising Road and Pretoria Grove:
Mrs Cornwell spoke regarding the condition of the footpath between Castle Rising Road and Pretoria Grove and explained that it is dirty, uneven, very narrow, covered in leaves and slippery.

She added that it is quite dangerous at times with not enough width for people to pass without walking on the muddy verge.

She explained that she had contacted NCC Highways about the situation and they have stated that the footpath does not meet their current intervention levels and they will not make any improvements to it.

Following this, Mrs Cornwell explained that she had obtained a quote from NCC which had been circulated to all members should the Parish Council wish to carry out the replacement footpath works.

It was explained that the work could only be carried out by NCC Highways and the cost would be an estimated £20,000.00, however, there may be a refund of any unspent funds.

After discussion, **Mrs Banks proposed that the Parish Council goes ahead with the footpath replacement works at Priory Lane, between Castle Rising Road and Pretoria Grove, this was seconded by Mrs Gotts, with two abstentions and two members against, the proposal was carried.**

It was said that as usual the proposal would go forward to the full Parish Council on Tuesday 10th March 2026, for ratification.

Wootton Park:

Update: No Report, a meeting is scheduled for next Thursday, 12th March 2026.

SWiB:

Update: Mrs Albinson explained that following the last Parish Council meeting she had looked further into some planting at the new Knights Hill Roundabout.

She added that the SWiB Team do not have the appropriate equipment to do the work, however, local gardener, Alex Beedle has indicated that he would be able to help at a reasonable price.

Mrs Albinson said that she had spoken to Borough Cllr Ring about a possible Grant towards the Project as well as to the Developers, however, she is just waiting to hear back from them.

She reiterated that she would like to take the idea forward and do something, but the SWiB Team just need some funding to do it.

It was felt that if the flat edge was laid to grass, it could be mowed, and then the mound in the middle could be planted with Spring Bulbs and Wildflowers.

Mrs Albinson stated that she would keep the Parish Council updated.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35pm.

6. Next meeting: To be held on **Wednesday 3rd June 2026** at 7pm.

3rd June 2026

Chairman