

# Sutton Benger Parish Council

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T: 07810-647183

## MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF SUTTON BENDER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2025 AT SUTTON BENDER VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 7:15 PM

**Present:** Councillors Adam Carwardine (Chair), David Thomson (Vice-Chair), Jan Campbell, Daniel Errington, Ruth Gaunt, Claire Mansfield, Shaun Morse, plus Sue Hart (Parish Clerk) + Cllr Craig following appointment

There were no members of the public present.

169.25	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b> Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Haselton (sickness). On a proposal from Cllr Carwardine and carried unanimously, <b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> to accept the councillor's apologies.</p>
170.25	<p><b>To approve the appointment of a Co-opted Councillor (For Resolution)</b> Councillors considered an application from villager Iain Craig for co-option onto the Parish Council.</p> <p>On a proposal from Cllr Carwardine and carried unanimously, <b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> to co-opt Iain Craig to Sutton Benger Parish Council.</p> <p>Cllr Craig Signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Code of Conduct and councillors welcomed him to the council.</p>
171.25	<p><b>Declarations of Interest:</b> In accordance with S31 of the Localism Act 2011 and the Parish Council's adopted Standing Orders – To receive declarations of any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in respect of any item contained in this Agenda. There were no declarations of interest relevant to items on the agenda.</p>
172.25	<p><b>Public Forum Session</b> There were no members of the public.</p>
173.25	<p><b>Minutes – To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 November 2025</b> The draft minutes had been circulated to councillors. On a proposal from Cllr Gaunt and carried unanimously, <b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> to accept the minutes as a true record, and they were signed by the Chair.</p>
174.25	<p><b>Planning Applications</b> To receive an update from Cllr Gaunt and to consider the response to the following:</p> <p><b>New Applications for Consideration:</b> <b>PL/2025/09090 5 Church Piece, High Street</b> – Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area. (Passed deadline for comments: 16Dec25 – information only) <b>PL/2025/09090 5 Church Piece, High Street</b> – Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area. (Passed deadline for comments: 16Dec25 – information only)</p> <p><b>Planning Updates:</b> <b>Lime Down Solar Farm Acceptance of Development Consent Order</b> On a proposal from Cllr Gaunt and carried unanimously, <b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> to Object to the Planning Inspectorate regarding this planning application. Reasons agreed were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Inappropriate location in a protected landscape</li><li>2. Excessive scale and disruption to rural communities</li><li>3. Harm to heritage assets</li><li>4. Adverse impact on the Cotswolds AONB</li><li>5. Overbearing infrastructure</li><li>6. Battery energy storage risks</li><li>7. Inadequate access and traffic risks</li></ol>

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8. Distance from the National Grid
9. Loss of productive agricultural land
10. Economic harm to Wiltshire
11. Irreversible long-term damage

It was noted that individuals can also go to the Lime Down project on the Planning Inspectorate website or via the link on [stoplimedown.com](http://stoplimedown.com) to register their objection.

**Land off the High Street** – Councillors were updated on the acquisition of the site by Charles Church Wessex and their offer to share their detailed reserved matters with the Parish Council. The Chair recommended that the Parish Council should engage in discussions with them, the areas of focus including the design points covered in the Sutton Benger Neighbourhood Plan, needing safe access to the site, access implications into the village, the potential for a crossing and any flooding implications.

On a proposal from Cllr Gaunt and carried unanimously, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Chair should confirm with the developers the Parish Council's willingness to discuss further before the January PC meeting and a small group was proposed comprising the Chair, Vice-Chair, Cllr Gaunt and the Clerk.

**ACTION:** Cllr Carwardine to set up the meeting.

#### **Wiltshire Council Decisions, Appeals and Enforcement Updates**

**ENF/2025/01050 Land at Seagry Hill** – Following the Parish Council's request for enforcement action at 'Walkers Rest' regarding building non-conformance to the original application, the clerk said she had heard nothing from Enforcement so had chased it again but still not received a reply.

Cllr Greenman suggested that the clerk should write an e-mail to Nick McCamphill copying him in.

**ACTION:** Clerk.

The Clerk said she had been unable to find the previous enforcement actions related to Frampton Farm on the Wiltshire Council portal. Cllr Greenman said that an e-mail was due to be issued from Wiltshire Council regarding traveller sites and this should be used as an opportunity to raise any outstanding issues.

**ACTION:** Clerk to keep on the agenda until more information is forthcoming.

Cllr Greenman noted that the Senior Planning Officer at Wiltshire Council, Simon Smith, would be giving a presentation at the February Chippenham Community Area Parish Forum.

**PL/2025/08048 Paddock End, Barrett Lane** – Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area. (Wiltshire Council Decision: No Objection)

**PL/2025/08375 Lake Farm, 19 Draycot Cerne** – Prior Notification: Building – Steel framed agricultural building (Wiltshire Council Decision: Prior Approval Not Required)

#### **175.25 New Parish Council Governance Documents for 2025/26**

(a) **To Resolve** on the adoption of a 3-year Financial Plan Policy

A draft of a new 3-year Financial Plan Policy had been circulated to councillors. Cllr Carwardine reviewed the main points with councillors.

(b) **To Resolve** on the adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 Funds Policy and Implementation Plan

A draft of a new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 Funds Policy and Implementation Plan had been circulated to councillors. Cllr Carwardine reviewed the main points with councillors.

On a proposal by Cllr Thomson seconded by Cllr Morse, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to adopt both the new 3-year Financial Plan Policy and the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 Funds Policy and Implementation Plan for 2025/26.

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<b>176.25</b>	<b>Finance - Report distributed to councillors</b>			
	<b>a) To note transactions since last report dated 10 November 2025</b>			
	31 Oct 25	Community No.1 Account (Current)		£667.80
	31 Oct 25	Community Instant Access Account (Deposit)		£62,710.15
		<b>Bank balances on Monday 10 November 25</b>		<b>£67,133.81</b>
	Note: Copies of Bank Statements had been forwarded to Councillors with Finance responsibilities			
	<b>Payments from Current Account during last month (not including officer's payments):</b>			
				<b>Minute</b>
	17 Nov	PAY	Lloyds Bank service charges	£4.75 150.25
	18 Nov	FPO	25-073 AD Grounds & Landscaping (Oct 2025)	697.25 150.25
	18 Nov	FPO	25-071 Craig Gingell for Benger Trails SSL certificate / domain name	£65.00 150.25
	18 Nov	FPO	S106 Payment: 25.072 Marcus Anstie Windows–Oct25	£140.00 150.25
	18 Nov	FPO	CIL 7/8: PCC Church Wall Fund	£6,000.00 113.25
	18 Nov	FPO	25-069 Peter Oldale for defibrillator invoice from Turtle Engineering	£54.97 150.25
	18 Nov	FPO	VE80 Event: Donation to SSAFA	£1,124.46 150.25c
	18 Nov	FPO	25-068 Sue Hart for purchase of 3 x Economy Dispenser bags for refilling village dog poo bins	£100.74 150.25
	18 Nov	FPO	25-070 Wiltshire Council Election 2025 invoice for administration of parish election	£500.00 150.25
	<b>Credits to Current Account:</b>			
	18 Nov		Deposit (0605-1779) to Current (0034-4200)	£12,000.00
	<b>Credits to Deposit Account:</b>			
	10 Nov		Lloyds Bank – Interest	£32.99
	<b>Transfers Between Accounts:</b>			
	18 Nov		Deposit (0605-1779) to Current (0034-4200)	£12,000.00
	To approve that overtime payments may be made to the Clerk for additional hours spent on the Parish Council's finances and significant projects between November – April 2026 On a proposal by Cllr Mansfield, seconded by Cllr Campbell, <b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> to agree that up to 6 hours per month may be claimed by the Clerk if necessary.			
	<b>b) To Resolve on the approval of future payments to be made online:</b>			
	Chq 1115		<b>25-076</b> British Legion Poppy Wreath	£26.00
	Online		<b>CIL Payment:</b> 25-074 Sue Hart for Screwfix Flood Warden purchases	£306.57
	Online		<b>Section 106 Payment:</b> 25-075 Marcus Anstie Windows– Nov 25	£90.00
	Note: Copies of invoices 25-073 to 25-075 attached plus Payroll records had been forwarded to councillors with finance responsibilities.			

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	<p>On a proposal by Cllr Carwardine and carried unanimously, <b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> to approve the December 2025/26 Finance Report including the staff salary and PAYE and other payments detailed therein.</p> <p><b>c) To approve the December 25 Financial Report</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="220 443 1321 544"> <tr> <td>7 Dec 25</td> <td>Community No.1 Account (Current)</td> <td>£1,298.41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7 Dec 25</td> <td>Community Instant Access Account (Deposit)</td> <td>50,743.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: right;"><b>Bank balances on Monday 8 Dec 25</b></td> <td><b>£52,041.55</b></td> </tr> </table> <p>On a proposal by Cllr Carwardine and carried unanimously, <b>IT WAS RESOLVED</b> to approve the December 2025 Finance Report.</p>	7 Dec 25	Community No.1 Account (Current)	£1,298.41	7 Dec 25	Community Instant Access Account (Deposit)	50,743.14	<b>Bank balances on Monday 8 Dec 25</b>		<b>£52,041.55</b>
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<b>Bank balances on Monday 8 Dec 25</b>		<b>£52,041.55</b>								
<p><b>177.25</b></p>	<p><b>3-Year Financial Plan</b></p> <p>The Clerk pointed out the areas of change from the previous budget format and discussion was held on the key areas of financial expenditure that specifically related to the Cost of Democracy.</p> <p>The Clerk also reviewed with councillors the implications on each year’s budget of various changes to the precept that will need to be considered, bearing in mind that the ring-fenced funds held in the Parish Council’s bank account from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 funds are not permitted to be used to fund the Cost of Democracy (i.e., the day to day running of the parish).</p> <p>Three different scenarios were considered – a minimal change budget which was demonstrated to significantly affect the financial reserves, a budget which included some sharp cuts to overall expenditure but would start to bring reserves back into range, or a reserves recovery budget to bring Parish Council reserves back within the recommended range for small councils.</p> <p>Given the amount of detail covered and the change in format to the budget, it was agreed that the Clerk would compile a document containing Notes to the 3-year Financial Plan and implications on the precept of alternative increases and circulate them to councillors. <b>ACTION:</b> Clerk</p> <p>As the 2026/27 precept will need to be finalised at the January Parish Council meeting, it was agreed that the Finance group councillors should meet prior to that meeting to discuss the detail that had been raised in the discussions.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Chair / Clerk to organise a suitable meeting date prior to the next agenda being posted.</p>									
<p><b>178.25</b></p>	<p><b>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funds Implementation Plan</b></p> <p>Cllr Carwardine had circulated to councillors some suggestions on allocating CIL funds before they expired.</p> <p>In view of the time spent on the above finance agenda items, it was agreed that councillors would continue to build on this list for further discussion at a future meeting. It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting would be a good forum to present this to parishioners.</p>									
<p><b>179.25</b></p>	<p><b>Chair’s Report – Cllr Carwardine</b></p> <p>Cllr Carwardine said that at the last Chippenham Community Area Parish Forum Melanie Grace from Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks had given a presentation and that there is an SSEN register of vulnerable people who can be given special consideration in any emergency.</p> <p>Cllr Carwardine announced two thankyou’s and well done’s:          To Cllr Gaunt for still managing to attend the Parish Council meetings in spite of illness.          To the Clerk for all the Finance work she had put in over the past months.          He presented each with a potted plant.</p> <p>He also said the Bellhouse Hotel had been sold and he had a meeting organised with the purchasers to understand more about their plans.</p>									

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<b>180.25</b>	<b>Vacancies for a Parish Councillor</b> The Clerk handed out copies of updated flyers that councillors were encouraged to use. The two remaining vacancies should also be posted on social media, and the website. <b>ACTION:</b> Clerk
<b>181.25</b>	<b>Clerk's Report and Matters Arising from previous meetings</b> <b>Clerk's Report:</b> The Clerk said that she would be on holiday for the week between XMAS and the New Year.  <b>Matters Arising</b> from previous meetings had grown so long that it was hard to find time to review each one at a council meeting. It was agreed that Cllr Thomson and the Clerk would review the list and only bring to the next meeting those that required specific action and minuting. <b>ACTION:</b> Clerk to organise with Cllr Thomson.
<b>182.25</b>	<b>Community Emergency Plan – Cllr Morse</b> Cllr Morse said that he had worked through the Community Emergency Plan and thought that quite a number of changes needed to be made. He would now give other groups in the village the opportunity to read it through. He would also talk to people who are on the volunteer list to ensure they are still engaged. The May Annual Parish Meeting would be a good opportunity to launch the plan. Councillors agreed with taking longer to review the detail carefully rather than just issuing it.  Cllr Campbell suggested that it would also be very helpful to villagers if an A4 sheet could be produced containing key information, e.g., who to ring depending on the emergency, and other useful notes.  There were vulnerable people in the village that may not necessarily be known about and the possibility of keeping a record of who might need support in a village emergency was raised, however, the issues of GDPR did not make this straightforward.  It was noted that in the past the Emergency Planning Officer at Wiltshire Council had run role play events of what to do in different types of emergency and whether it could be possible to get something similar done in the village.
<b>183.25</b>	<b>Village Updates – Clerk</b> In the absence of time for separate agenda items at this meeting, reports had been circulated from Cllr Mansfield regarding the Village Hall, Cllr Carwardine regarding Traffic Calming and Cllr Errington regarding the Parish Steward.  Two points were made regarding the Parish Steward: 1. Whether the land owner should be approached to clear field ditches at the junction to Draycot Manor as the jetting team have cleared the drains there. 2. Whether the flower bed fitted onto the pedestrian pavement at the entrance to Manor Farm Drive is a Wiltshire Council or Parish Council owned asset in order to determine who is responsible for remedial work.
<b>184.25</b>	<b>Correspondence sent / received.</b> <b>Received:</b> Thank you letter from SSAFA (the Soldiers', Sailors', and Airmen's Families Association) for the VE80 event donation.  <b>Contact Forms received via SBPC Website:</b> Contact Form from villager regarding partial blockage of one of the flood prevention culverts in Sutton Benger Brook. Cllr Errington had followed this up with the Parish Steward.

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<b>185.25</b>	<b>Exchange of information and Any Items for Consideration at Next Meeting</b> Cllr Greenman noted that the Wiltshire Council Planning call-in percentage (which relates to applications rejected by Wiltshire Council but overturned by the Planning Inspectorate) is marginally better at 8.6 % but is still difficult. Cllr Campbell asked whether a database should be set up to record flooding incidents in the village and agreed to follow up with the Clerk.
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The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 7:15 pm at Sutton Benger Village Hall, Chestnut Road.**

**MEETING CLOSED AT 21:40**