

Sutton Benger Parish Council

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T: 07810-647183

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF SUTTON BENDER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14th JANUARY 2026 AT SUTTON BENDER VILLAGE HALL

Present: Councillors Adam Carwardine (Chair), Jan Campbell, Iain Craig, Daniel Errington, Ruth Gaunt, Jeremy Haselton, Claire Mansfield, Shaun Morse (part) + Jo Watchman following appointment plus Sue Hart (Parish Clerk)

186.25	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Thomson (holiday).</p> <p>On a proposal from Cllr Carwardine and carried unanimously, IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the councillors' apologies.</p>
187.25	<p>To approve the appointment of a Co-opted Councillor</p> <p>On a proposal from Adam and carried unanimously, IT WAS RESOLVED to co-opt Jo Watchman to Sutton Benger Parish Council. Jo Signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and councillors welcomed her to the council.</p>
	<p>Councillor Jo Watchman joined the meeting.</p>
188.25	<p>Declarations of Interest: 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.</p> <p>The Parish Council, and Cllr Mansfield as the Parish Council's Village Hall representative, had been involved in discussions and giving support to the Village Hall regarding the preparation of their planning application, PL/2025/09775, which will be funded from a Section 106 Agreement managed by the Parish Council, therefore the Parish Council did not vote on this application.</p> <p>Cllr Watchman noted that she had a pecuniary interest in the planning agenda item PL/2025/09623 and did not vote on the resolution.</p>
189.25	<p>Public Forum Session - no points were raised.</p>
190.25	<p>Minutes – To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th December 2025 The draft minutes had been circulated to councillors. The Clerk proposed a minor change to Finance Minute, 176.25 (c) Invoice 25-073 should have been numbered invoice 25-076 and also the addition of Cllr Mansfield to the attendees.</p> <p>On a proposal from Cllr Carwardine and carried unanimously, IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the revised minutes as a true record, and they were signed by the Chair.</p>
191.25	<p>Planning Applications To receive an update from Cllr Gaunt and to consider responses to the following:</p> <p>New Applications for Consideration: PL/2025/09623 Development Site known as Land Off High Street, Sutton Benger – Approval of Reserved Matters. Erection of 60 dwellings: Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale (Deadline for Comments: 22 January 2026)</p> <p>It was noted that planning permission has already been granted to the site which has now been taken over by Charles Church Development. A meeting had been held between representatives of Charles Church, the Chair, Clerk, and Cllr Gaunt as the Parish Council's Planning Lead.</p>

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On a proposal from Cllr Gaunt and carried unanimously, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to submit the Parish Council's comments to this application including:

- Appearance – black window frames and metal railings not in keeping with the NDP and neighbouring properties.
- Landscaping – deeper tree planting barrier between site and existing cottages, usage intended for cut path along western boundary, adequate plans for maintaining young trees
- Village sewage system already under strain
- Significant flooding along B4069 from the River Avon
- The need to extend the 30 mph limit to include the exit to the site.

(See Wiltshire Council Planning Portal for the full Parish Council feedback)

PL/2025/09775 Sutton Benger Village Hall – Construction of an oak-framed gazebo with open sides and tiled roof etc (Deadline for Comments: 6 February 2026) Note that this project is being carried out under the auspices of the Parish Council. Noted by the councillors.

PL/2025/09825 – Land at Gate Farm, High Street – Outline Planning Permission – Some Matters Reserved. Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except means of access from the B4069) for up to 90 no. (class C3) residential dwellings (including 40% affordable dwellings) including the creation of a new vehicular access (from the B4069), pedestrian and cycle paths, parking spaces, public open space, biodiversity enhancement, landscape planting, surface water attenuation, associated infrastructure and other associated works. (Deadline for comments: 5 February 2026)

On a proposal from Cllr Carwardine and agreed unanimously, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to this application. Main reasons agreed came under the categories of:

- Conflict with the Adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan and Spatial Strategy
- Housing Saturation and Cumulative Impact
- Foul Drainage, Sewerage and Infrastructure Capacity
- Highway Safety, Traffic Volumes and speeding
- Lack of Sustainable Transport and Car Dependency
- Emerging Wiltshire Local Plan
- The loss of rural character of Sutton Benger
- Overall considerations of conflicts with National, Wiltshire Council and Parish policies

(See Wiltshire Council Planning Portal for the full Parish Council objection including statistics on the disproportionate amount of growth sustained by the Parish in the past decade)

ACTION: Cllr Watchman agreed to manage the distribution of a detailed information sheet regarding this application.

PL/2026/00142 - 7 Park Lane - Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area. (Deadline for comments: 30 January 2026) The Tree Warden has approved and councillors had no objection to this application.

Planning Updates Appeals and Enforcement Updates:

ENF/2025/01050 Land at Seagry Hill – Update on SBPC request for enforcement action at 'Walkers Rest' regarding building non-conformance to original application.

The Clerk had still not received a conclusion to this Enforcement request and will keep this and the Frampton Farom occupancy enforcement issue on the agenda until resolved.

ACTION: Clerk to follow up and keep both on agenda.

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	<p>Wiltshire Council Decisions: PL/2025/08775 Land at Rockwell Cottage, Sutton Lane (Permission in Principle) – Erection of single dwelling (Wiltshire Council Decision: Approve) PL/2025/09030 5 Church Piece, High Street - Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area. (Wiltshire Council Decision: No Objection) PL/2025/09131 6 Park Lane - Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area. (Wiltshire Council Decision: No Objection)</p>																																																																						
192.25	<p>Finance Report – Report Distributed to councillors</p> <p>a) To note transactions since last report dated 8 December 2025</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">7 Dec 25</td> <td style="width: 60%;">Community No.1 Account (Current)</td> <td style="width: 15%;"></td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">£1,298.41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7 Dec 25</td> <td>Community Instant Access Account (Deposit)</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">50,743.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: right;">Bank balances on Monday 8 Dec 25</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£52,041.55</td> </tr> </table> <p><u>Note: Copies of Bank Statements were forwarded to Finance Councillors</u></p> <p>Payments from Current Account during last month (not including officer’s payments):</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 10%;"></th> <th style="width: 10%;"></th> <th style="width: 40%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%;"></th> <th style="width: 15%; 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	<p>d) To approve the January 26 Financial Report</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin: 10px 0;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">31 Dec 25</td> <td style="width: 65%;">Community No.1 Account (Current)</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">£1,320.97</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9 Jan 26</td> <td>Community Instant Access Account (Deposit)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£66,129.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">Bank balances on Monday 9 Jan 26</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£67,450.37</td> </tr> </table> <p>On a proposal by Cllr Carwardine and carried unanimously IT WAS RESOLVED to approve forthcoming payments and the January 2026 Finance Report including the staff salary and PAYE and other payments detailed therein.</p> <p>e) To consider and approve the budget at end of 3rd Quarter following a review on 6 January 2026 by councillors with Finance responsibilities. A copy of the 3rd Quarter budget had been circulated to councillors.</p> <p>On a proposal by Cllr Errington and carried unanimously, IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the 3rd quarter budget.</p> <p>f) To consider and allocate actions arising from the 6th January review</p> <p>It was decided that more time needed to be given to the actions resulting from the review. It was noted that the Village Hall rely heavily on rental income, the Benger Blaze and Benger Bears and do not have that much in their reserves for maintenance or capital projects.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to bring forward to a future agenda.</p> <p>g) To agree, and for the vice-chair to sign the Financial Year 2026/27 precept notification form.</p> <p>Following discussion councillors agreed to set the precept for FY 2026/27 at £22,284, equivalent to a Band D council Tax charge of £38.40. This represented an increase of 20% on the FY 2025/26 precept.</p> <p>On a proposal by Cllr Mansfield, seconded by Cllr Campbell IT WAS RESOLVED to set the FY 2026/27 precept at £22,284.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to submit the SBPC precept requirement to Wiltshire Council</p>	31 Dec 25	Community No.1 Account (Current)	£1,320.97	9 Jan 26	Community Instant Access Account (Deposit)	£66,129.40		Bank balances on Monday 9 Jan 26	£67,450.37
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193.25	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 Funds held by the Parish Council</p> <p>The Clerk noted that there were still some funds to redistributed from the CIL allocation expiring in the current financial year. The Wiltshire Council CIL team did not think that consultancy or payments to the RISE Trust, who were outside the village, would qualify.</p> <p>An additional tranche has just been received from the Land at Sutton Lane allocation but as CIL and Section 106 reserves are no longer included in the budget did not affect the precept calculations.</p> <p>Cllr Mansfield said that the Section 106 payments related to the Village Hall AV equipment were still unclear and the Village Hall now wished to finalise the project.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to investigate the 2024/25 financial history as Section 106 total funding allocation was unclear from the 2025/26 finances.</p> <p>The Parish Council’s approach to grant applications and donations was changing due to the importance of making better use of the CIL reserves rather than using funds raised by the precept. The Grants and Donations policy therefore needs to be reviewed. Outstanding grant requests that are on hold are for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draycot Cerne – churchyard maintenance 2. Draycot Cerne – renovations to building 									

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	<p>3. Village Hall – Skittles balls</p> <p>Cllr Campbell also brought forward a request for a grant from the school for an outdoor classroom which will need a decision in time for them to be able to implement their project for the summer.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to review Grant Application policy and carry forward any outstanding applications to the February PC meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to respond to the applicants to explain the delay.</p>
<p>194.25</p>	<p>Section 106 Agreement arising from Land at Sutton Lane</p> <p>The Village Hall Committee have reviewed the projected costs for the implementation of the Covered Public Open Space and do not anticipate having enough funding left to cover doing anything more than refurbishing the MUGA which would not be covered by the Section 106 agreement.</p> <p>As a result the Village Hall Committee has put together proposals for alternative sports facilities on the recreation ground which have been reviewed by councillors. The suggestions appear to be within the Section 106 guidance for fulfilment.</p> <p>On a proposal by Cllr Gaunt and carried unanimously IT WAS RESOLVED that the Clerk should submit the changes to the Wiltshire Council Section 106 team.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to follow up with the Wiltshire Council Section 106 team.</p> <p>The Clerk noted that she had still not received an update from Wiltshire Council to confirm that this Legal Agreement had been concluded with Wiltshire Council and the Developer.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to follow up with Wiltshire Council.</p>
<p>195.25</p>	<p>Chair's Report – Cllr Carwardine</p> <p>The Chair was very pleased to report that villager Richard Palusinski has been made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the New Years Honours List. Richard, as Chair of the Spirit of Normandy Trust, has spent two decades supporting D-Day veterans including organising annual trips to take them to Normandy.</p> <p>The Parish Council unanimously recorded their congratulations to Richard on his memorable achievement.</p> <p>The Chair and Cllr Gaunt had held a meeting with the new occupants of the Bellhouse Hotel to review their future plans. He said there were plans to reopen the pub and start a café with a possible future shop. The owners plan to relocate their offices from Chippenham to the Beringer Suite.</p> <p>The Chair and Cllr Gaunt had held a meeting with the farmer from Lake Farm regarding the B4069 flooding outside Chauffeur Cottage. The farmer has agreed to keep his field by the dip in the road as clear as possible and also encouraged the Parish Steward to keep going with clearing.</p> <p>The Chair noted that the next Chippenham Area Community Parish Forum would be held at Kington St Michael Village Hall on Wednesday 25th February and there would be an update on Planning from Wiltshire Council's Senior Planning Officer. He had already submitted questions regarding the importance given to the Neighbourhood Development Plan in planning decisions and what were legitimate planning objections.</p> <p>Regarding Traffic, he had now had a meeting with Perry Payne, from the Wiltshire and Swindon Road Safety Partnership, who had been shocked about the level of speeding through the village. Cllr Carwardine had provided him with a 3-month analysis of the speeding results.</p>

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	<p>The January LHFIG meeting has finally approved funding for a survey regarding a pedestrian crossing on the High Street. The Parish Council will need to contribute £750 towards the survey.</p> <p>Highways have confirmed they didn't finish off line painting in Seagry Road and have agreed to come back and complete the works.</p> <p>Christian Malford Parish Council are installing depth gauges by the Avon River including on the Sutton Benger side of the bridge. The Chair was reviewing obtaining an extra depth gauge to cover the area that floods closer to the village.</p>
196.25	<p>Annual Parish Meeting – Cllr Carwardine On a proposal by Cllr Gaunt and carried unanimously IT WAS RESOLVED that 2026 Annual Parish Meeting should be held on Thursday 21st May.</p> <p>The PCC and Village Hall Committee have already confirmed their availability and a provisional booking has been made for the Village Hall. The event can now be publicised in the Parish News and on the website.</p> <p>ACTION: Clerk to put on the March Agenda follow up and promoting and running the event.</p> <p>ACTION: Cllr Watchman to start setting up a marketing plan to encourage maximum attendance.</p> <p>Cllr Campbell asked if there could be an element of the meeting that was specifically organised for youngsters to attract them to come along.</p>
197.25	<p>Parish Charities and Community Volunteers – Cllr Carwardine Cllr Carwardine noted that many villagers did a lot of work for local charities or volunteering in the community. He asked Cllr Craig to provide an update to councillors on the work he did for the Chippenham FoodBox, run out of St Peters Church, Chippenham, by independent volunteers. Cllr Craig said there were several volunteers from Sutton Benger participating and that they are now covering all of Chippenham as well as supporting residents in Sutton Benger, Christian Malford and Kington Langley.</p>
198.25	<p>Clerk's Report and Matters Arising from previous meetings The Clerk had nothing to report and said that Outstanding Matters Arising are still to be reviewed by the Clerk and Cllr Thomson. ACTION: Clerk to follow up.</p>
199.25	<p>Community Emergency Plan – Cllr Morse Detailed feedback to be carried forward to the February meeting.</p>
200.25	<p>Village Updates – Clerk Reports were received on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Traffic Calming – Cllr Carwardine b) Village Hall – Cllr Mansfield c) Parish Steward – Cllr Errington <p>The Clerk noted that Cllr Errington's report noted that the land owner would need to be approached to clear field ditches at the junction to Draycot Manor as the jetting team have cleared the drains there. ACTION: Cllr Errington to follow up.</p>

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201.25	Wiltshire Council Wiltshire Councillor Greenman was unable to attend the meeting.
202.25	Correspondence sent / received. Received: The Clerk had received an email from a villager reporting the constantly flashing 20 mph lights on the corner of Sutton Lane and the High Street. ACTION: Clerk to follow up with Wiltshire Council. Contact Forms received via SBPC Website: None
203.25	Exchange of information and Any Items for Consideration at Next Meeting There were no updates from councillors.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 11th February 2026 at 7:15 pm at Sutton Benger Village Hall, Chestnut Road.

MEETING CLOSED AT 21:25.