



LONG SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 5th May 2026 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Cox (Chair), Rousell (Vice-Chair), Coombes, Pritchard, Greenfield, Furse-Roberts, Tulk and Wielgus.

Members of the Public: 0

Somerset Councillors: Cllr Tim Kerley

The meeting started at 7.30pm.

MINUTES

The Clerk opened the meeting and invited nominations for Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

26/014: Election of Chairman

Cllr Fell proposed Cllr Cox remain as Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Wielgus, and all members agreed.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Cox be elected as Chairman and he signed the acceptance of office.

26/015: Election of Vice-Chair

Cllr Cox proposed that Cllr Rousell remain as Vice-Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Fell and all members agreed.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Rousell be elected as Vice-Chairman and he duly signed the acceptance of office.

26/016: Public Questions and Observations

None

26/017: Somerset Councillors Report

Cllr Kerley congratulated Cllr Cox on his re-election as Chairman and provided a summary of the past year: in March 2025, a budget shortfall of £101m was projected - this has since been reduced to £25m. Some service reductions were required, but these were not as severe as first anticipated; around 20,000 potholes have been repaired (approximately four times the number repaired in the previous year); funding of £3-4m has been secured for the Strawberry Line, with further grant funding potentially available; in relation to bus services, the Council has subsidised the No. 54 service and the Slinky bus has been an absolute success; this division was the trial area and thanks were given for the Parish Council's support. A fourth service is now being rolled out. A new bus link from Street to the train station has also been introduced, with two Slinky buses reserved for this route.



The first council houses in Charlton Adam have been delivered, and approval has been given for a £50m refurbishment of the Octagon Theatre. It was reported that 250 children have been supported to remain in mainstream school, rather than being placed in special schools. Local Education Authority-funded staff are being deployed into schools which although costly initially, is expected to be worthwhile. Adult Social Care has achieved a £13m saving and, for the first time in 15–20 years, has come in under budget. This transformation was attributed to investment.

Cllr Cox commented that it was nice to have some good news. He asked about increased investment in gully clearing and whether an update could be provided on when this will take place. It was noted that a map will be updated; the current spreadsheet is complicated, and a live map will prove helpful.

Cllr Tulk said that gullies had been affected by grit following recent resurfacing and that he had reported this online. It was noted that 35 teams are currently carrying out these works, but six teams were recently replaced due to poor workmanship, so they are being monitored.

Cllr Cox summarised the position regarding Knole Pit Meadow as discussed at the last meeting. The Parish Council had asked the Planning Department for advice, and had been re-directed to Enforcement, who in turn asked for an online report. Cllr Cox said it was frustrating as the Parish Council was looking for guidance, and it was disappointing that an enquiry could not be made – the relationship needs to be two-way, given the Parish Council's role as a statutory consultee. Cllr Kerley confirmed that enforcement is a significant issue - officers are recruited but do not stay long-term. Cllr Coombes reported that the enforcement department's online portal does not work and asked that this be raised. It was noted that the relationship should be improved.

Cllr Wielgus asked whether bus services operate at commuter hours; this was confirmed, and it was noted that two Slinky buses are reserved for the station run. Active Travel routes were discussed; cycle routes can be difficult to progress due to landownership constraints. The piecemeal approach has taken time, with an intention to link routes up in due course, but it is now taking effect. Cllr Wielgus commented that, if the Parish Council knew what was planned to go through the parish, it could work collaboratively.

Cllr Coombes asked for an update on Bineham Triangle as the recently repaired road surface is now breaking up. The triangle needs to be removed, and Cllr Kerley offered to follow up on this.

26/018: Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85(1))

None were given.

26/019: Declarations of Interest

None were made.

26/020: Minutes of the last meeting held on 7th April 2026 (LGA 1972 Sch. 12 para 41(1))

To receive and approve the [minutes of the meeting](#) held on 7th April as a true and accurate records of that meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 7th April 2026 as a true & correct record of that meeting. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.



Matters Arising

The car on bricks had been reported online to the police, but it is not clear if it is on the highway or private and. The clerk was asked to report the matter to Abri.

26/021: Appointment of members as officers as representatives or to existing committees or working groups

- a. Village Hall (VH) – Cllrs Cox, Tulk and Fell were confirmed as representatives on the VH Committee.
- b. Planning – Cllrs Rousell & Wielgus
Highways - Cllr Rousell to report any highways defects to the clerk; Cllr Tulk to continue to monitor the gullies.
Footpaths – Cllr Pritchard to liaise with Rights of Way (ROW) volunteers
Accounts / Payment Security – Cllrs Cox, Rousell and Furse-Roberts are maintained as signatories on the bank mandate.
Parish Warden Co-ordinator – Cllr Tulk
Parish Communications & website – All members to inform the clerk of items for the newsletter or website. Cllrs Cox and Coombes will be responsible for Facebook content.
Environment Group – Cllrs Wielgus, Furse-Roberts and Greenfield.

26/022: Dates for Future Meetings

The following dates were confirmed as meetings of the Parish Council for the municipal year 26/'27:

2026: 2nd June, 7th July, 8th September*, 6th October, 3rd November and 1st December

2027: 5th January, 2nd February, 2nd March and 6th April

**Note that this is not the first Tuesday of the month.*

The Annual Parish Council Meeting in May will depend on when an election is called. Cllr Cox mentioned that he will work on encouraging an election for the Parish Council as one has not been held for over 20 years.

Meetings will take place in the Committee Room of the Village Hall at 7.30pm unless otherwise advertised.

26/023: Planning Matters

- a. There were no new planning applications for consideration in the parish.
- b. To note the following updates on previous applications:
 - (i) 26/00855/DOC1 – Barns at Ciderpress Farm, Knole
Discharge of conditions in relation to 22/01197/LBC granted – 17/04/26
 - (ii) 26/00501/HOU – The Old Stables, Knole
Permission granted with conditions – 20/04/26
 - (iii) 26/00140/OUT – Land at Upton Bridge Farm, Long Sutton
Permission granted with conditions – 27/04/26

Decision notices have been circulated to all members for information.



26/024: Village Hall and Recreation Ground

Following a recent committee meeting, Cllr Cox had circulated a copy of the minutes. He reported that the continuing lack of a Minute Secretary is frustrating, but Tracy Rousell was praised as an exceptional Treasurer, and it was noted that the list of bad debts has almost disappeared. The Sports Showcase Day was reported to have been a huge success, attracting almost 200 people, and is already benefiting some of the organisations involved. The event originated from the tennis group who are introducing social evenings on Fridays and it was noted that the good weather contributed to the success. A box of tennis equipment is going to be made available, and donations of old rackets requested.

26/025: Dog Fouling on the Recreation Field

At the previous meeting, a resident had requested that the “No Dogs Allowed” position be reconsidered. It was noted that, for the last two years, dogs have been permitted on leads to reduce dog fouling, and the Village Hall Committee felt the current approach should remain. The Chairman read from the resident’s email as he was unable to attend the meeting in person asking if a compromise could be reached, whereby dogs would be banned from the playing area but permitted around the clubhouse. It was also noted that there are several walks available around the village, and it was suggested that a box/board with suggested walks could be provided.

Cllr Rousell commented that signage is only effective if enforceable and that, in practice, some people will choose to ignore signs; it therefore needs to be a self-policing arrangement. It was reported that enforcement options had been explored but while the area is public space, it is privately owned. Cllr Kerley commented that the restriction is effectively unenforceable and that rules should not be made if they cannot be enforced, and the community should be encouraged to self-regulate.

Cllr Tulk suggested replacing the existing signs with larger signage, particularly as people visit from other villages. Cllr Coombes proposed that the status quo be retained but that signage be improved and if matters do not improve, a ban should be introduced next summer. This was seconded by Cllr Tulk and unanimously agreed. The clerk was asked to include an article in the next newsletter reminding dog owners that children use the recreation field and dog fouling creates a health hazard.

26/026: Environment Group

Cllr Wielgus reported that the remainder of the Wessex Water grant has been spent on an order for plants that are expected tomorrow and next week. A Facebook notice will be posted to request volunteers for a planting session. There was also enthusiasm for a summer picnic and a date will be agreed. The group will coordinate activities with relevant national campaigns (e.g., Butterfly Week) and they are also planning an “Energy Evening” event and are considering whether to include guest speakers or be information-led.

It was reported that a Cornish hedge is being built by David Francis and the leaking pond was discussed. Advice from the FWAG representative was that it may self-seal and should be left for the time being. If it is still leaking next spring, funding may be considered for more clay lining.

Fingerposts have been offered to Rights of Way volunteers, and it was noted that the leak in the irrigation pipe has been repaired.



26/027: Finance

- a. To approve the accounts for payment in May 2026.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the accounts for payment for May 2026.

- b. To view and approve the bank reconciliation to 30th April 2026.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliations to 30th April as circulated.

- c. The following regular monthly payments for the financial year 26/'27 were approved:

- Website & Marketing support - £50
- Payroll - £6

- d. The clerk provided a verbal report following the Internal Audit on 10th April. A couple of points were noted regarding the incorrect hourly rate for the clerk's pay, and the trustee listing on line with the Charity Commission. The full report and the AGAR statements will be on the agenda next month. The Chairman thanked the clerk.

- e. The Council's insurance policy is due to be renewed on 1st June. Only one premium quote had been received by the meeting. Members agreed to delegate authority to Cllrs Cox, Rousell and Furse-Roberts who together with the clerk will consider all quotes received and decide on the provider.

26/028: Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

- (a) Councillors reviewed the Council's Standing Orders (NALC Model Standing Orders 2018 (England) updated 31 March 2025).

Members resolved That the Standing Orders remain fit for purpose and be re-adopted without amendment.

- (b) Councillors reviewed the Council's Financial Regulations (based on the NALC Model Financial Regulations (May 2024)) previously circulated by the clerk.

Members resolved that the Financial Regulations remain fit for purpose and be re-adopted subject to the following minor amendments (clarification/fraud prevention only, no change to financial limits):

1. Section 7.9 – to clarify that changes to supplier bank details must be verified by an independent check (e.g., contacting the supplier using previously held contact details) before any amendment is made.
2. Section 15.3 – to replace “negotiate all claims” with “liaise with the council's insurers and handle claims on the council's behalf”.

26/029: Annual Parish Meeting 2026

Final arrangements and contributions were agreed, and details will be finalised by the clerk and shared with Cllr Wielgus to incorporate into a slide presentation. The agenda for the event will be displayed around the village by Cllr Cox. The locum clerk for the evening was confirmed.

Cllr Tulk will organise tea, coffee and cakes for refreshments.



26/030: Representative reports from councillors

- a. Community Safety (including monthly crime statistics from Police.uk and the Speed Indicator Device (SID)).

The SID is back in the village for the month of May on the Langport Road. There was one crime reported in the area in March.

- b. Parish Warden

A meeting is scheduled with Jacob Parsons on Thursday to discuss additional grass cutting; performance to date was noted as very good. Cllr Coombes asked that the entrance to the VH car park be cut back and visibility splays at other junctions be addressed.

- c. Highways and Footpaths

The Rights of Way (ROW) volunteers have done an excellent job repairing the stile at the entrance to the golf club. Three new volunteers have joined, and another stile has been rebuilt in Bineham. Landmoor Corner, where the land meets the track, has two gates and a stile; wooden gates are preferred. Dick Sheppard is waiting for the wood, and this is in hand. Further galvanised gates are needed from Somerset Council where the new ROW Officer is usually very helpful in supplying items.

26/031: Other correspondence not previously distributed & Councillors' Comments

Cllr Wielgus had circulated a second draft of the 'Welcome Letter'. He asked members to provide feedback, including on suggested methods of distribution.

Cllr Pritchard reported that whilst she and her husband had been happy to help with the pétanque element of the Sports Showcase Day, she had not envisaged running a team for matches against neighbouring villages and does not currently have the time to take on that responsibility. Cllr Furse-Roberts offered to take that on and will liaise with the Clerk and former councillor Gill Rickards who led the project to try and establish a club, and some regular players who would like to play in a mini-league.

Cllr Greenfield reported that the noticeboard at the end of the Village Hall is often blocked by the shop owner's van. She offered to display the minutes on the noticeboard regularly and Cllr Cox thanked her and will provide the key.

Cllr Wielgus reported that work is currently underway on the grant application.

26/032: Communication: website and e-newsletter

Members agreed that the next newsletter should include the following matters:

Annual Parish Meeting (APM) report – pétanque report – church and school fete 20th June (also the headmistress is leaving after 17 years) – Environment Group report – dog fouling – WI summer do.

26/033: Date of next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on **Tuesday 2nd June 2026 at 7.30pm**. The meeting will begin with the **Village Hall and Recreation Ground (VH & RG) Annual Trustees Meeting**.



26/034: Agenda items for the next meeting

Cllrs Pritchard, Coombes and the Clerk sent apologies for the Annual Village Meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm

END OF MINUTES