



LONG SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the parish council held on Tuesday 2nd September 2025 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Cox, (Chairman), Rousell (Vice Chairman), Coombes, Pritchard, Greenfield, Rickards, Tulk & Wielgus.

Members of the Public: 2

Somerset Councillors: Cllr Page sent apologies.

Public Questions and Observations

Meeting closed for public session at 7.31pm

A resident asked if something could be done about Littlefield Lane flooding. A lot of storm water and surface water runs into the lane from both directions (the A372 and Burnt House Lane) as the drains can't handle the volume of water, and gathers at the lowest point, the farmhouse. There was a grill that was meant to divert water into a culvert, but the ditches are all overgrown and / or not deep enough and the grill has gone missing. He's happy to contact someone about it if he can be pointed in the right direction. Cllr Tulk has recently been overseeing the clearing of gullies with contractors and will investigate the outflow and status of the ditch.

Somerset Councillors Report

Cllr Kerley reported that he has had verbal confirmation from Highways that the re-painting of double white lines at Bineham Road crossroads will get done. He will ensure that it happens.

He also reported on the programme to clear the back log in the planning department. They are 4 weeks into a 12-week plan, and there is minimal contact with officers and enforcement whilst this is ongoing. However, he does have a meeting on 3rd September about regularising the various applications associated with the Crouds Lane site. He will report back to the Chairman as soon as possible. Members again insisted that it should be called in to the planning committee and urged TK to review the detailed comments that the parish council submitted following the recent public meetings.

Cllr Wielgus also asked if he could speak to the Rights of Way team about adopting footpaths at Orchard Farm, Knole which is currently the subject of an SRA grant application. BW is concerned that SCC's Footpaths team may require bridges for the right of way, and this may put the project over budget and therefore at risk. He is currently engaging with them to explore options.

Re-opened at 7.45pm

MINUTES

25/078: Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85(1))

There were no apologies for absence.



25/079: Declarations of Interest

Cllr Wielgus declared a personal interest as the owner of Orchard Farm. (Item 25/089)

25/080: Minutes of the last meeting held on 1st July 2025 (LGA 1972sch12 para 41(1)).

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st July had been circulated previously.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the [minutes of the meeting](#) held on 1st July 2025 as a true & correct record of that meeting. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

Matters Arising

Members were pleased to note that Stuckey's House, The Green had been granted planning permission with conditions.

25/081: Planning Matters

To consider the following new planning applications in the parish:

- i. 25/01962/COL – Manor House, Great Lane, Knole TA10 9JB
Proposal: Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for the existing use of land as established residential garden.
This is for **notification** only.
- ii. 25/01713/HOU – 2, Rowley Cottages, Hermitage Road, Upton, Long Sutton
Proposal: Demolition of existing lean-to and erection of two storey side extension.

Cllr Rousell summarised the application and showed the plans and elevations. There were no objections.

Members **AGREED** unanimously to support the application.
- iii. 25/02060/TCA – Lower Knole Farm, Knole, Long Sutton TA10 9HZ
Proposal: Notification of intent to carry out tree surgery works to No.1 tree within a Conservation Area
This is for **notification** only.
- iv. 25/02063/TCA - Lower Knole Farm, Knole, Long Sutton TA10 9HZ
Proposal: Notification of intent to carry out tree surgery works to various trees within a conservation area – annual pruning of trees in apple orchard – removal of old dead apple trees as and when required.
This is for **notification** only.



Members **NOTED** the details of the applications that were for notification only.

25/082: Gully Clearing

The Chairman used Standing Order 2(a) to move agenda item 25/089 forward on the agenda to be discussed in tandem with 25/082 and Standing Order 3(e) to open the floor to members of the public who wished to comment.

Cllr Tulk confirmed that the contractors had worked hard clearing the roots from drains, predominantly in Knole but also in Knightlands Lane and outside the school. It was slow work which was particularly difficult in Knole. Cllr Wielgus thanked him for overseeing the work and proposed 3 more days before the worst of the weather arrives.

Members **AGREED** to 3 more days of contracted gully clearing at £720 + VAT per day. The clerk will liaise with Cllr Tulk to arrange.

There is also a section of Hermitage Road from the crossroads that needs to be cleared of mud – the Chairman confirmed that the lengthsman could do that within his remit and Cllr Tulk will arrange that.

Village Flooding Issues

David Crawshaw reported on behalf of the Knole Flood Group: the summer vegetation has been cleared from the top pond which will help with rainfall, and he also thanked Cllr Tulk for the hard work root clearing.

The Orchard Farm project grant application has been submitted to the SRA. The review panel meets on 30th September.

The Bineham / Stonemead Lane pipe project is now complete but hasn't been tested yet! The clerk confirmed that the SRA grant monies had been received earlier that day and will ensure the contractor's invoice is paid tomorrow.

The final works would be to the bridge over Stonemead Lane. It has been surveyed, and the large stone supports in the middle of the bridge act as a limiter. It would be a major engineering job & very expensive to remove them, but they are not giving up!

He also mentioned the news that the Environment Agency were cutting funding to the IDB which would be very bad news as they are relied upon to clear the ditches to the Levels. The Chairman suggested he continue to bang the drum for Knole.

25/083: Parish Preparedness Survey

The clerk had previously circulated a draft resilience plan which needs updating. There is also the conference at Taunton on 16th October bringing together suppliers and experts to help parishes plan for resilience in the future.

The Chairman proposed that Cllrs Tulk and Greenfield work together on updating the information and locating the welcome pack that used to be given to new arrivals in the village. It contained some similar information. They will circulate a draft in due course for consideration at the next meeting.



25/084: Finance

- a. To approve the accounts for payment in September 2025 and retrospectively those made in August 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the accounts for payment for August and September 2025.

- b. To view and approve the bank reconciliation to 31st July & 31st August 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliations to 31st July & 31st August 2025 as circulated.

- c. To note the conclusion of audit report from the external auditor and the date for publication of the notice. The Chairman congratulated the clerk for a clean sheet!

Members **NOTED** the report and confirmed the date for publication of the notice as 3rd September.

25/085: Councillor Vacancy

The clerk hadn't received any written expressions of interest over the summer for the casual vacancy. The position will continue to be advertised, and a request made to advertise it at the school too. The clerk will arrange this.

25/086: Village Hall and Recreation Ground

- a. Cllr Cox provided a report from the recent committee meeting (minutes provided). Kate Stent has joined the committee looking after the tennis courts and liaising with the LTA.
- b. Cllr Coombes had recently stepped down from the committee due to other commitments, and Cllr Cox thanked her for all her hard work. Cllr Rickards agreed to join the Management Committee to maintain the required membership of 3 parish councillors, alongside Cllrs Cox and Tulk.
- c. Arrangements are in place to recruit a new cleaner – the position is being advertised until 14th September. Cllr Cox requested delegated authority to appoint the best candidate in due course. Members **AGREED** with this proposal.
- d. There had been a request for pickleball in the Village Hall and perhaps on the tennis courts also. It was agreed that they would require their own public liability insurance like other users, and perhaps a demo could be organised to ensure that the facility is appropriate. Cllr Rickards will respond accordingly to the resident who had enquired. The Chairman reminded the Council that bookings for the hall and surrounding area are the responsibility of the VH management committee and not the Parish Council.

25/087: Outdoor Table Tennis & Boules Court Project

Cllr Rickards provided a report; she is waiting to hear from Tesco and Sport England after submitting grant applications, but a SALC Community Health and Wellbeing grant of £1000 for equipment has been awarded provided the facility is installed. There have been quite a few expressions of interest from residents.



25/088: Environment Group

Cllr Rickards reported that the group is working incredibly well with different members leading in areas of special interest. There are now 13 active members and quite a few extra helpers. There was a visit from Somerton to see what is going on and new members have fed back how impressed they are with the group's activity. They will be presenting to the annual Somerset Wildlife Trust Event where people from different parishes share what they are doing.

Ponds - two ponds and hibernaculum have been dug in the Environment field. The FWAG inspection tomorrow will hopefully sign them off and award the grant funding.

Members **APPROVED** payment of an invoice from William Cox for digging the ponds.

Somerton Gardening Club are growing plants for the field and around the pond and the grant from Wessex Water of £1000 will also be used to purchase plants around the pond. There was agreement about the wording for appropriate signage and members **APPROVED** the purchase of a life buoy.

A member of the team is going to build some Cornish hedges as a habitat from stone and the cut turf. Many hours have been spent pulling thistles to weaken them. There is one particularly bad patch which had to be strimmed. This work will be ongoing!

The field needs cutting and baling – Cllr Cox said he would ask some contacts. Two team members are attending a meadow creation course at Carrymoor Environment Centre in September.

A survey of tree health was carried out - 104 had been lost in the hedgerow and 34 others. Reimagining the Levels will supply half replacements for free and the rest at 50p each, approximately £34 in total. Water is now connected to the field (thanks to Cllr Cox) and there is a 200m hose (courtesy of Little Upton Ltd) so next time there are drought conditions, the trees can be watered and saved.

Multiple emperor dragonflies, a Shirl Carder and a Brown Banded Carder both very rare have been spotted in the village. Butterflies...small copper, small whites, common blues, small coppers and small heaths have all been seen in the field as well as more common varieties.

Despite signs requesting dogs remain on leads, some dog owners still ignore them - an ongoing problem that is difficult to solve.

A team member has built a compost bin from pallets, and this can be used to compost waste from the field which anyone in the village can use.

Cllr Wielgus confirmed that plans are well underway for Environment Day on Saturday 25th October from 9am to 12.30pm. Many guests from outside the village have been invited and there will be plant and seed swapping stall amongst approximately 15 others. They plan to showcase the field with an aim to get more volunteers signed up. He requested help to publicise the event on Facebook and in the newsletter.

25/089: Village Flooding Issues

See earlier item 25/082.



25/090: Parish Council Policy Review

- a. Updated Safeguarding Policy
- b. Data Protection Policy

Both policies had been circulated previously by the clerk to all members.

Members **APPROVED** and **ADOPTED** both policies unanimously with the suggested addition of Kate Stent as Safeguarding Officer specifically for the tennis courts. Cllr Pritchard is happy to undertake any further appropriate training, and the Chairman thanked her for her commitment.

25/091: Representative reports from councillors.

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

**The data collected from the device is published on the website.*

The device had been in one location only this time because of roadworks. Average speed of 34mph was recorded, with most drivers breaking the speed limit on a Sunday. The 50 percentile is 28mph. In June 4 crimes were reported all on the on A372.

- b. Lengthsman

Cllr Tulk had circulated a report of the lengthsman's actions over the summer: overhanging branches outside the Telephone Exchange have been cut and removed; the pieces of crumbling wall along the Langport Road footpath have also been removed; grips in Grove Lane leading to Bineham have been cleaned and weed control has taken place around the tennis courts and the new Pavilion building. The poplar trees adjacent to the village hall car park require specialist equipment and this will need to be outsourced.

The remedial works to the horse chestnut tree on the green are still scheduled for the autumn / winter.

- c. Highways and Footpaths

Cllr Pritchard confirmed that this month the volunteers provided a metal pedestrian gate on path L21/10 between Littlefields Lane and the Langport Road where the old gatepost had rotted away. Additional members have joined the volunteer group now called "The Stile Council".

The Chairman said that he had been in contact with Wales & West about the additional car park spaces at the Village Hall that they are using, chasing for additional compensation. They continue with the mains gas works and will return to the village once road closure notices are in place.

The clerk had received correspondence from a resident about the roadworks outside the Devonshire Arms as mentioned in the July meeting agenda item 25/073 (c). She has been chasing Highways for an update or status report and has now been passed to a third contact.

25/092: Communication: website and e-newsletter

Members agreed that the next newsletter should include the following matters: big push on environment day including the seeds and plant swap; casual vacancy; gullies cleared; slinky bus use; RC to send more local businesses to the clerk.



25/093: Correspondence including any not previously distributed & Councillors' Comments

The clerk had received further correspondence from the resident about the suggestion for a dog park on the recreation field. Some members felt that it could be a good idea but involves quite a lot of work and no one has the capacity to take it on presently. Perhaps if a new member joins, this could be a project that they work on.

Cllr Pritchard reported that the W.I President expressed thanks for the parish council's support for the recent cream tea event which raised £516.

25/094: Date of next meeting.

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on **Tuesday 7th October 2025, at 7.30pm** in the Village Hall.

25/095: Agenda items for the next meeting.

Vexatious complaints policy

Code of Conduct review

Apologies from Gill Greenfield for beginning of October & November meetings.

Meeting closed at 8.54 pm

END OF MINUTES