



LONG SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the parish council held on Tuesday 7th October 2025 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Cox, (Chairman), Pritchard, Greenfield, Tulk & Wielgus.

Members of the Public: None

Somerset Councillors: Cllrs Page and Kerley sent apologies.

Public Questions and Observations

There were none in the absence of any members of the public.

Somerset Councillors Report

Cllr Page had sent the latest Liberal Democrat Somerset Councillor report which is available on the website as a Supporting Paper.

MINUTES

25/095: Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85(1)).

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Roussel and Rickards. Cllr Greenfield would be late arriving.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and approve the apologies and reasons submitted.

25/096: Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Wielgus declared a personal interest as the owner of Orchard Farm. (Item 25/106)

25/097: Minutes of the last meeting held on 2nd September 2025 (LGA 1972sch12 para 41(1)).

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September had been circulated previously.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the [minutes of the meeting](#) held on 2nd September 2025 as a true & correct record of that meeting. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

Matters Arising

Gully clearing – A date for ‘flushing’ of the recently cleared gullies is scheduled for the end of October/early November. The aim is to do Knole and the centre of the village.



25/098: Planning Matters

- a. To consider the following new planning applications in the parish:
 - i. 25/02265/HOU – 2, Rowley Cottages, Hermitage Road, Upton, Long Sutton
Proposal: Demolition of existing lean-to and erection of two storey side extension.

The applicant had re-submitted a new application with a change of roof materials. There were no objections.

Members **AGREED** unanimously to support the application.

- b. Decision notices had been circulated previously.
Cllr Cox said that it was disappointing to see the Crouds Lane application had not been called in to committee, but one or two conditions supported the comments made by the Parish Council. He was also pleased to see the clause reminding the applicant about the CIL payment that will be due on the development.
- c. Members **NOTED** the appeal status of the Rights of Way modification of bridleway Kingsmoor Drove and Pill Bridge Lane, 821M.

Cllr Cox reported that at the recent SALC Parish Conference, the consensus from other parish councillors was that any comments made on planning applications appear to be largely ignored by the Planning Department. Whilst understanding the challenges the department faces, they don't feel that it is right to ignore Parish Councils as statutory consultees. He proposed writing to the leader of the council to express these views, and members agreed unanimously.

The Chairman will draft a letter.

The clerk reported that she had received information about work going on in Knoles to a listed building, which doesn't appear to have the requisite Listed Building Consent. She will write to inform the Planning Department.

25/099: Lengthsman

The lengthsman has resigned after 14 years in the role as he is taking on a lot more tree consultancy work and wanted to focus on that. Members thanked him for his many years of service. It provides an opportunity to consider how the various tasks are dealt with in the future, either another lengthsman, or a larger contractor. The matter will need careful consideration, and could have budgetary implications, but it is a good time of the year for this to happen.

The clerk will share the current job description with members to draw up a new tender contract and then approach possible contractors. She will liaise on this primarily with Cllrs Tulk and Cox.

25/100: Parish Preparedness Survey

Cllr Tulk had circulated a re-drafted emergency plan with details of meeting points (the Village Hall and the golf club), and other useful contact numbers. After a brief discussion, the clerk was asked to include the details of First Responders & those who would willingly share generator usage in the event of a prolonged power cut. To protect personal data, the clerk's number would be the only



published point of contact, and other details could then be provided as necessary. The clerk will include an update in the next newsletter so that residents are informed. The Chairman thanked Cllr Tulk for his work on this.

25/101: Finance

- a. To approve the accounts for payment in October 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the accounts for payment for October 2025.

- b. To view and approve the bank reconciliation to 30th September 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliations to 30th September 2025 as circulated.

- c. To note the Q2 finance report and spend against budget for the first half of the year.

Members **NOTED** the content of the report.

Cllr Cox commented that at the halfway point in the financial year, the finances were largely in good shape. The budget allowance for Devolved Services could be further used for more gully clearing over the winter / spring as required depending on the weather and some grip clearing too.

- d. To note the Q2 VAT reclaim of £5,020.76 had been submitted on 1st October.

Members **NOTED** the Q2 VAT reclaim and the amount of £5,020.76.

25/102: Councillor Vacancy

The clerk had included details of the vacancy in the latest newsletters and at the school via the PTFA. Cllr Tulk was in conversation with a possible co-optee.

25/103: Village Hall and Recreation Ground

Cllr Cox reported that the new cleaner has started last week and made a good start. The Chairman confirmed that Long Sutton Primary School and the Friendly Society had both donated towards the cost of repairing the drainage channel across the entrance of the car park. The work will be carried out during the October half-term break to minimise disruption.

Members **APPROVED** a quote of £ 2,275 + VAT from Peter Tulk to carry out the work.

The pickleball demonstration had taken place on 17th September and some councillors and committee members were present. They felt that the benefits outweighed any potential issues and a regular pickleball club will provide an opportunity for increased activity for residents and revenue for the Village Hall.

The VH Committee will handle the bookings and relationship with the pickleball club, and monitor the usage as there are some limitations, particularly on width as well as height. The main concern was damage to the projector, but rules can be imposed against playing high shots and if necessary, a guard can be installed. The club would have to provide insurance and manage the sessions and wear white-soled non-marking shoes.



There was a brief discussion about improvements to the VH wifi to include the Sports Pavilion and the outside space. Cllr Wielgus will write a specification and put the Chairman in touch with a contractor who could do the necessary work.

25/104: Outdoor Table Tennis & Boules Court Project

In her absence, Cllr Rickards had provided an update which Cllr Wielgus reported on her behalf. On funding, Sport England have agreed to waive the crowdfunding requirement if match funding can be proved instead. Having previously secured a SALC Community Health and Wellbeing grant of £1000, the proposal was for the Parish Council to commit up to £1000 to the project in the eventuality that the Tesco grant is not awarded.

Cllr Pritchard commented that she had received more positive feedback from various residents on the project, and as part of Pro-Active Somerset – an organisation keen to engage older people in various activities - she felt that boules in the village would be an excellent addition and appropriate for families and all ages and abilities, not just older people!

After a brief discussion, members **AGREED** to support the project with funding up to £1000 but would like to see the Sport England commitment in writing before any work commences.

The clerk reminded members that all invoices for any supplies or equipment hire must be made out to the parish council to meet grant requirements.

Cllr Cox confirmed that any spoil can be dumped in the dry ditch along the footpath of the playing field.

25/105: Environment Group

Cllr Rickards provided a report in her absence. The latest news included the following: the ponds have been seeded with wildflower mix and bird scarers are in place. These were purchased with some of the Wessex Water grant funds; the bottom pond is filling, but the top pond has drained again; the triangle at the top of Ilchester Lane has been reinstated by the contractors and a sign installed (also hoping for some wildflowers thanks to the new owners); the pond safety signs and the life buoy are in place; the first willows have been purchased and planted using the FWAG grant funds.

Future plans include more willows being planted to create a plantation that can be harvested & used to create willow structures; a weeping willow will be planted by the pond; hoping to have 12 fruit trees donated to create a small orchard; Reimagining the Levels are replacing the trees in the hedging that died at a small cost (£38); the Cornish hedge is being built; and there will be a design competition to create better signage for the ponds and at the entry point to the field.

Finally, Cllrs Wielgus and Greenfield will be making a presentation of the group's work at the Somerset Wildlife Trust Annual event on 18th October. The site will be registered with an organisation who are mapping various interesting projects in the locality. They have also joined the newly created South Somerset Environment Forum which raised the need to borrow machinery from others when required.



Cllr Wielgus reported that Cllr Coombes is helping to find someone to cut the grass. Plans for Environment Day in two weeks are coming along well – they have 15 exhibitors, and Cllr Greenfield is organising a plant swap. He asked for plenty of posts on Facebook to promote the event and the local MP has been invited. There is a lot of interest and they hope to recruit more volunteers. He asked for approval to spend up to £100 from the allocated budget for cakes and wildflower seeds to give away on the day.

Members **APPROVED** the expenditure and wished him well with the event.

25/106: Village Flooding Issues

The clerk reported that the SRA Grant review panel had met on 30th September and they had not awarded the grant to the Knole Flood Group for work at Orchard Farm. It had been turned down due to the possible risk of increased flooding to neighbouring properties, FWAG's suggested requirement of an engineer's appraisal, and they felt that more water catchment could be carried out further upstream.

Cllr Weilgus expressed disappointment particularly as the chance has now been missed to catch the water this winter and mitigate possible flooding in Knole. Members of the group will speak to the SRA at the upcoming event on 15th October, and may reapply in the next round, although they feel that the cost of an engineer's report at approximately £10k isn't required for a £20k project.

Cllr Tulk reported that the drain by Burnt House Lane on the Langport Road has been cleared again by the council and they filled in a manhole which should divert surface water into the fields as per Harry Fry's request at the last meeting.

25/107: Parish Council Policy Review

- a. Code of Conduct – this policy had been circulated to members previously for review.
- b. Vexatious Complaints Policy – this policy had been circulated to members previously for review.

Members **APPROVED** and **ADOPTED** the updated policies, and the clerk will update the website accordingly.

25/108: Service to the Community Award

Members **NOTED** the successful nomination of Dick Sheppard for the above award, and Cllr Pritchard confirmed her attendance to accompany him at the ceremony on Friday 10th October at Taunton Rugby Club together with another volunteer, Richard Fell. The Chairman congratulated Dick – all members were absolutely delighted.

25/109: Representative reports from councillors.

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



The SID is not located in Long Sutton this month, so nothing to report. There were 2 crimes reported during July 2025 in the village. More recently, farm buildings were broken into and £40k worth of items were stolen. The Wales and West Gas vans were broken into on the last night they were working in the village and some specialist equipment worth £20k was stolen.

b. Lengthsman – see earlier agenda item (25/099)

Cllr Tulk further reported that the three silver birch trees in the VH car park have been inspected and require immediate removal as they have outgrown their location – there is an immediate danger to the highway and the shop. The Friendly Society will donate £1000 towards the cost of the necessary works.

Members **APPROVED** the work as quoted by J & K Trees at a cost of £1200.

c. Highways and Footpaths

Cllr Pritchard reported that the team have repaired gate no 23783 on footpath 21/10 in Littlefields Lane today. They will be going out on Thursday in Knole and putting in a new gate. Dick Sheppard has asked to speak to Cllr Weilgus about the signposts donated to the Environment Group and where they should be installed as there are a lot of them.

25/110: Communication: website and e-newsletter

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

Prostate testing in Street – defib locations – PTFA wreath making – Environment Day report – Slinky Bus – other item from LD SC report – Cricket club awards night – Dick Sheppard's Community Award – Somerset Art Week had good footfall (2 residents) – thankyou to Craig - Drain clearing coming – tree surgery and drainage channel work at the VH.

25/111: Correspondence including any not previously distributed & Councillors' Comments

Cllr Cox reported the following from the recent SALC Parish Conference on 3rd October: Somerset Council will be charging for uncontested elections in the future (2027 is when the next elections will be held); he also attended a workshop on. An organisation called Thrive can help parish councils put a Community Plan together, which is different from a Neighbourhood Plan and helps to set priorities over a 5 year period. Although not necessary now having recently completed numerous capital projects, Cllr Weilgus who has worked on one before elsewhere, thinks that they are a good idea, and should be kept in mind for the future.

Changes to the 'Automatic Fire Alarm Response' following the consultation earlier in the year, will come into effect at the beginning of November. Broadly, these are the non-attendance to automatic fire alarms at industrial, commercial, retail and public assembly buildings unless there is a confirmed sign of fire and the phased introduction of non-attendance to automatic fire alarms at residential buildings during weekdays unless there is a confirmed sign of fire. There are exemptions to the above for premises with a night-time sleeping risk and they will continue to respond to automatic fire alarms at domestic buildings at any time day or night. These changes will reduce the number of automatic fire alarms they attend to make the Service more efficient, and ensure firefighters are able to respond to genuine emergencies.



The clerk had circulated the latest training sessions being offered in the autumn. Members can ask to be booked on to any that are of interest.

Cllr Pritchard has asked to stand down as the safeguarding officer and will be replaced by Kate Stent from the VH Management Committee.

25/112: Date of next meeting.

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on **Tuesday 4th November 2025, at 7.30pm** in the Village Hall.

25/113: Agenda items for the next meeting.

Apologies from Ben Wielgus & Gill Greenfield for beginning of the November meeting.

Meeting closed at 9.08pm

END OF MINUTES