SUTTON VALENCE PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Office, Sutton Valence Village Hall, North Street, Sutton Valence, Maidstone ME17 3HS
Tel: 01622 844135
clerk@suttonvalence.org.uk

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held at Sutton Valence Village Hall on Wednesday 14th October 2026 from 7:00pm to 9.33pm

Members present: Cllr S. Annereau (Chair), Cllr A. Castle, Cllr C. Read, Cllr I. Walker
Also present: Mrs C. Barrett (Locum Clerk) and Cllr Brian Black (Kent County Council (KCC))

141/26 – Opening Statement
The Chair opened the meeting and asked if anyone was recording the meeting. The Clerk confirmed she was recording to aid accuracy of minutes.

142/26 – Apologies for Absence
Cllr M. Flint (holiday) and Cllr M. Gammon (work commitments) sent their apologies, together with Cllrs Trzebinski and Round (Maidstone Borough Council (MBC)).
Cllr Annereau also informed Members that Cllr D. Atkinson had resigned from the parish council due to work commitments. Members recorded thanks to Cllr Atkinson for his many contributions as a councillor and would be sorry not to work with him in the future.

143/26 – Declarations of Interest
No declarations were made.

144/26 – Submissions
County Cllr Black gave an update on noise pollution, highways issues and local government reorganisation.
Cllr Black would continue his efforts to establish ownership of, and responsibility for, the land between High Street and Lower Road.
Members discussed recent road traffic accidents on the A274. Cllr Black would follow up with the highways department to obtain accident data.
Cllr Black indicated that he would be pleased to contribute part of his allocated allowance towards a parish Christmas tree and works at the War Memorial Playing Fields. The Clerk would formalise a request by email.

145/26 – Public Participation
Four Members of the Public present were in attendance regarding planning matters. It was **RESOLVED** to bring forward the relevant planning agenda items for discussion as follows:

a. 25/500499/FULL – Notification of appeal lodged with the Planning Inspectorate regarding erection of polytunnels. Land At Rectory Farm, Rectory Lane, Chart Sutton.
   RESOLVED: To restate the parish council's previous objection. Cllr Annereau would make a further written representation before the 3rd November deadline.
b. 25/505124/OUT - To consider a Planning Committee meeting notification from MBC regarding the application for the erection of up to 41 residential dwellings including affordable housing at South Lane.
   Members discussed the effects of existing developments at South Lane. Strong opposition to the latest application was noted, with over 200 residents having signed a petition against it.
   Residents were reminded that the parish council sought to represent their views but, as a consultee, had limited influence over planning decisions. They were encouraged to submit comments through the MBC planning portal, lobby their MP and report rare wildlife species such as the Tawny Owl which had been spotted through the Weald of Kent Wildlife reporting tool.
   RESOLVED: Cllr Annereau to speak at the MBC Planning Committee meeting on Thursday 15th October. She outlined the grounds for the parish council's objection. A resident who was not present at this meeting would also speak against the application.
   Members agreed that it would be important to ensure compliance with any conditions such as those governing construction traffic if the application was approved.

County Cllr Black and the Members of the Public left the meeting at 7.40 pm.

146/26 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting
RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2026 were approved.

147/26 – Finance
a. Receipts – RESOLVED: Receipts for the month of September, detailed in Appendix A, were approved.
b. Payments – RESOLVED: Payments for the month of September, detailed in Appendix B, were approved. Payments made by direct debit – NOTED: Direct Debit payments for the month of September, as detailed in Appendix B, were noted.
   NOTED: The insurance renewal cost had been approved as a separate agenda item at the September council meeting but omitted from the list of payments for approval. Payment had since been made.
c. Grant applications – Applications received over the last year were considered. RESOLVED: To approve a £500.00 grant to Heart of Kent Hospice and a £50.00 donation to the Battle of Britain Memorial.
d. Projects and budget-setting for the 2027-28 year were discussed. RESOLVED: To delegate authority to a budget-setting working party comprising Cllrs Castle and Read who would work with the Clerk.

148/26 – Open Spaces
a. The recommencement of sheep grazing at Platinum Meadow was considered. RESOLVED: To approve sheep grazing during the winter months. Cllr Castle would make the necessary arrangements.
b. A proposal by The Queen's Head Old Fellows (QHOF) to install a commemorative bench at Bowhalls allotments was considered. RESOLVED: To postpone further consideration until the November council meeting. The Clerk would ask QHOF if they would consider siting the bench in alternative locations.
c. The completion of clearance work in the former container area at War Memorial Playing Fields was noted. RESOLVED: To postpone a decision about reseeding the area until spring.
d. Next steps for the official re-opening of the War Memorial playground were discussed. RESOLVED: To postpone an official re-opening once phase 2 of the playground had been completed.
e. Information about accessible play equipment was noted. It was proposed that this would be looked at as part of phase 2 of the playground installation.

149/26 – Village Hall
a. An update on the lease was received. RESOLVED: To make a one-off donation towards repairs to the patio area, subject to work completion before the end of the financial year.
b. Plans for the external toilet were considered. RESOLVED: To obtain quotes for demolition work.

150/26 – Governance
a. **Staffing Committee**
   i. The Staffing Committee Terms of Reference (ToR) were reviewed. RESOLVED: To approve the ToR subject to amendments by the Clerk.
   ii. The appointment of a Chair, Vice-Chair, and committee member were discussed. RESOLVED: To appoint Cllr Castle as Chair, Cllr Flint as Vice-Chair and Cllr Read as committee member.
   iii. Next steps for the staffing committee were addressed. RESOLVED: To arrange a committee meeting to progress the recruitment process for a permanent Clerk & RFO.
b. **Policies**
   i. The Councillors' Code of Conduct was reviewed. RESOLVED: To approve and review biannually.
   ii. The Health and Safety Policy was reviewed. RESOLVED: To approve the policy proposed by Cllr Castle and review biannually. It was agreed that further work could be done to ensure robust health and safety practices were followed by those contracted to undertake work on parish council land.
   iii. The removal of out-of-date policies from the website was considered. RESOLVED: To approve removal of out-of-date policies by the Clerk.
c. The Clerk's proposal to give read-only access by link sharing to documents on the parish council one drive was discussed. RESOLVED: To approve the Clerk giving read-only access by link-sharing in principle. The Clerk would ask the parish council's IT Support provider how to do this.

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At 8.59pm Members RESOLVED to suspend Standing Order 3(x) to permit the meeting to continue beyond the two-hour limit.

151/26 – Autumn Newsletter – RESOLVED: Cllrs Annereau and Gammon to agree content with Cllr Flint and present a proof at the November council meeting. They would follow up by email with individual councillors to ask them to write articles.

152/26 – Remembrance Sunday

a. An update on plans was received. The Clerk had met with representatives from the Royal British Legion (RBL) and QHOF, and arrangements were in hand. It was noted that the RBL had previously arranged a buffet at the Queen's Head pub after the remembrance service. As the Sutton Valence RBL branch had closed they would no longer be able to arrange. RESOLVED: To obtain a quote for a buffet with a budget of £175.00.
b. The Councillor who would participate in the event and lay the parish council wreath was confirmed. RESOLVED: Cllr Annereau would represent the parish council.

153/26 – Planning

a. The Council considered the following planning matters:
   i. 26/503301/SUB – Submission of details pursuant to condition 4-(enhancement of ecology), 5-(site renewable or low carbon energy production) 8-(external lighting), 10-(water efficiency statement). 11-(Construction Management Plan),12-(permeable construction of hardstanding areas), 13-(boundary treatments) subject to 25/504176/FULL. Land at Gladwish Farm, Gladwish Lodge Headcorn Road.
   RESOLVED: No comment to be submitted
   ii. 26/503401/FULL – Demolition of shed and erection of a 4-bedroom dwelling house with the provision of 3no. parking spaces, 3no. cycle spaces, a dropped kerb and associated hard and soft landscaping. Land Adjacent to Montague Cottage, Chartway Street.
   RESOLVED: No comment to be submitted.

154/26 – Reports

a. **Councillor Reports**
   Cllr Walker gave a report on village hall matters.
   Cllr Annereau gave a report on hedge cutting at the allotments.
b. **Clerk's Report**
   The Clerk gave an update on activities and matters listed in Appendix C.
   She would send an email to remind councillors about upcoming leave.

155/26 – Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED: to reschedule the November council meeting from Wednesday 11th November to Wednesday 18th November. Noticeboards, website and social media would be updated.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.33 pm

Signed by the Chair

Chair's Initial.....

Appendix A.

Unity Balance at 01/10/26: £197,572.00

Receipts September – October 2026

September – October Receipts			
Name	**Reference**	**Description**	**Amount £**
Parking Permit	Bay 13	1x pro-rata permit renewal	27.00
Parking Permit	Bay 5	1x 12-month permit renewal	96.00
Parking Permit	Bay 3&4	2x 12-month permit renewal	192.00
Parking Permit	Bay 9&16	2x 6-month permit renewal	96.00

Appendix B.

Payments for approval September – October 2026

September – October Payments			
Name	**Reference**	**Description**	**Amount £**
Dacre Activities	750	Grounds Services	6,000.00
SV Village Hall	261006	Room Hire	1,145.49
Starboard Systems Ltd	INV-22912	Scribe Software	91.20
Kay's Admin Office	058	Locum Clerk Service	2,214.40
Parish Online	29UH032-009	Mapping Software	420.00
Councillor Annereau	G181061296 G185303134	Reimbursement Microsoft Licenses – September Payment	13.61 12.10
Ivaron Construction	6546	Playing Field Clearance	420.00

Payments to note (direct debit estimates for information only) – September 2026

September Direct Debits			
Name	**Reference**	**Description**	**Amount £**
Unity Bank		Service Charge	7.00
VALDA ENERGY		Electricity Charges	165.82
Daisy	5006994 25393005	Landline/Broadband	71.06
Daisy	4704835 25427719	Mobile	16.45
Hugo Fox	GTCRH5E	Website	35.99
Rollpay	GC6P72EQ9N	Pension Admin	15.84

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Appendix C.

Clerk's Report – Tasks completed

Meeting – Grounds maintenance review, Head of Grounds Sutton Valence School
Meeting – RBL and QHOF representatives for Remembrance Sunday
Allotment tenant admin
Co-option admin
Storeroom and office clearance tasks
Arranged training for councillor Read.
Banking Sept-Oct
Updated Scribe financial software with invoices/receipts July – August
Updated Facebook and website with road closures and other resident notifications
Carpark permit renewals
Item preparation/research for meeting agenda
AGAR Completion
High volume of resident inquiries; consulted with Kent Highways around road safety concerns raised and obtained accessible play equipment quotes.

Tasks in progress

In-box backlog
Savings Account Research
Updating signatories on Nationwide and Unity Bank accounts
Reviewing policies
Keeping calendar of statutory responsibilities for new Clerk e.g. July/August: Playground inspections & Insurance renewal

Tasks to be done

Look at audit report findings.
Allotment renewals
Begin budget work.
Update Asset Register with play equipment changes.
Arrange training for Cllr Read