SUTTON VALENCE PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Office, Sutton Valence Village Hall, North Street, Sutton Valence, Maidstone ME17 3HS
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Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held at Sutton Valence Village Hall on Wednesday 9th September 2026 from 7:00pm to 9.18pm

Members present: Cllr M. Flint (Vice-Chairman), Cllr A. Castle, Cllr M. Gammon, Cllr C. Read, Cllr I. Walker
Also present: Mrs C. Barrett (Locum Clerk), Cllr M. Round and Cllr Z. Trzebinski (Maidstone Borough Council (MBC))

141/26 – Opening Statement
The Vice-Chairman 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 S. Annereau (holiday) and Cllr L. Castle (work commitments) sent their apologies. Cllr Flint also informed Members that Cllr L. Castle had resigned from the parish council due to work commitments. Members recorded their thanks to Cllr L. Castle for his considerable contributions as a councillor and expressed regret at his resignation.

129/26 – Declarations of Interest
No declarations were made.

130/26 – Submissions
Cllr Round provided an update on the recent announcement that local government restructuring in Kent would be delayed.

Cllr Trzebinski provided an update on the increase in traffic and road closures in Headcorn and Sutton Valence Ward.

Cllr Trzebinski reported that he had tabled a motion at the previous Borough Council meeting about increased littering in Sutton Valence. Cllr Round noted that a recent MBC report had identified Sutton Valence as the cleanest area in the borough. Members considered that the report did not accurately reflect local conditions. Following discussion, Cllr Round advised the Clerk to contact MBC's Head of Environmental Health about the areas most affected.

131/26 – Public Participation
There were no members of the public present.

132/26 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting
RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 12th August 2026 were approved.

133/26 – Finance
a. Receipts – RESOLVED: Receipts for the month of August, as detailed in Appendix A, were approved.
b. Payments – RESOLVED: Payments for the month of August, as detailed in Appendix B, were approved, with one exception which was noted by the Clerk for follow up and is marked with an asterisk.
c. Payments made by direct debit – NOTED: Direct Debit payments for the month of August, as detailed in Appendix B, were noted.

The Clerk was in the process of making a list of suppliers where the council could investigate cost-savings.

134/26 – Open Spaces

a. Date and details of the re-opening event at The War Memorial playground – Cllr A. Castle was in contact with Sutton Valence Primary School and would confirm details once arranged.
b. Work to make the ground safe at The War Memorial Playing Fields following removal of the storage container – Cllr Walker would arrange a site visit with his contact as soon as possible to assess requirements.
c. The renewal of the Electric Vehicle Charger contract with KCC for the village hall carpark – RESOLVED: that the agreement be approved in principle, subject to clarification of a number of matters to provide assurance that the Council would incur no financial cost or liability by entering into the agreement. The Clerk would seek the necessary clarification and report back.
   Further to correspondence between the Clerk and a parish resident about the availability of the chargers, it was felt that they were not intended to be used as a vehicle owner's main source of electric charge.
d. The Harbour play area safety inspection report recommendations - NOTED: The inspection had identified only low risk faults and recommendations were noted. The Clerk would seek recommendations regarding accredited contractors for play area works.

135/26 – Village Hall

a. Next steps for revision of the village hall lease agreement – RESOLVED: Cllr A. Castle would join the village hall working party, assuming responsibility from Cllr L. Castle.
   She would finalise and circulate the lease agreement. This would then be shared with the village hall committee for review.
b. To agree a plan for streamlining parish council paper files – The Clerk and Cllr A. Castle had undertaken preliminary work towards organising the filing system in line with local government document retention guidelines. This work would continue as and when capacity allowed.
   RESOLVED: Cllr Walker to liaise with the village hall committee to confirm whether they owned any of the contents in the Daphne Green Room.

136/26 – Insurance Renewal Quote for the year commencing 1st October 2026

RESOLVED: to approve a one-year insurance renewal with Hiscox Insurance at the cost of £3,277.20. A £95.23 increase from the previous year was noted; the Clerk would ask for a cost breakdown.

137/26 – Recruitment Flier and Autumn Newsletter

a. Revised recruitment flier and distribution list – RESOLVED: to approve the flier and Cllr Flint's list of locations for distribution.
   Cllr A. Castle was willing to assume responsibility for staff recruitment from Cllr L. Castle.
b. Subjects for inclusion and next steps for the Autumn newsletter – RESOLVED: after some discussion about potential topics, it was agreed that Cllr Flint would produce a content plan.

138/26 – Planning

a. The Council considered the following planning applications:
   i. 26/503085/FULL – Section 73 Application for Minor Material Amendment to approved plans condition 2, pursuant to 25/504847/FULL. Land at 10 The Platt.
      RESOLVED: No comment to be submitted.
   ii. 26/502894/FULL – Demolition of existing dwelling, garage and barn. Erection of 1 new dwelling including access, landscaping and associated works. Land at South Orchard, South Lane.
      RESOLVED: No comment to be submitted.
   iii. 26/503187/FULL – Erection of a 3-bedroom detached self-build single-storey dwelling to provide accommodation for the farmworker, with associated landscaping, biodiversity enhancements and drainage infrastructure. Land at Stallance Farm, Rectory Lane.
      RESOLVED: Concerns were raised about ownership of the approach road. The Clerk would seek greater clarity from the Planning Officer.
   iv. 26/503116/FULL – Erection of a detached single-storey ancillary family annexe within the

residential curtilage of the existing dwelling. Dwelling at 14 South Lane.
RESOLVED: No comment to be submitted.

b. The Chart Sutton Neighbourhood Plan – RESOLVED: No comment to be submitted.

At 8.58pm, Members RESOLVED to suspend Standing Order 3(x) to permit the meeting to continue beyond the two-hour limit.

139/26 – Reports

a. Councillor Reports
Cllr Gammon gave an update on Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) matters including local government reorganisation, asset transfers, the National Planning Policy framework, the Smaller Local Authorities AGAR portal, a call for remote and hybrid meeting reforms and dates for Finance and Planning conferences.
Cllrs Flint and Walker would attend the Maidstone Borough Council Parish Conference on 16th September.

b. Clerk's Report
The Clerk gave an update on activities and matters listed in Appendix C.

140/26 – Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council was scheduled for 14th October. Cllrs Flint and Gammon would be unable to attend.

There being no further business, the Vice-Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.18pm

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Signed by the Chair

Appendix A.

Unity Balance at 31/08/26: £233,444.46 Receipts – August 2026

August Receipts			
Name	**Reference**	**Description**	**Amount £**
Parking Permit	Bay 1&2	2x 6-month permit renewal	96.00
Parking Permit	Bay 7&8	1x 6-month permit renewal 1x 12-month permit renewal	144.00
Parking Permit	Bay 21&22	2x 12-month permit renewal	192.00
MPE Football Club	MPE FC Pitch Pay	1st payment pitch hire	300.00
Allotment	Allotment plot B 14	Allotment Deposit	50.00
Allotment	Allotment plot B-J3	Allotment Deposit	50.00

Appendix B.

Payments for approval – August 2026

August Payments			
Name	**Reference**	**Description**	**Amount £**
Diginet Solutions	2791	Photocopier	61.62
Playdale	66624	Playground Equipment & Installation	30,883.57 *
Starboard Systems Ltd	INV-21925	Scribe Software	91.20
Kay's Admin Office	052	Locum Clerk Service	1,422.80
Councillor Annereau	930 CC10 A404	Reimbursement Remembrance Sunday Road Closure payment	100.00
Councillor Annereau	G178482187 G174404850	Reimbursement Microsoft Licenses - August payment	13.61 12.10
Rospa Play Safety	100603	Annual Inspection Harbour Play Area	109.20

*****Approved subject to resolution of an item query.

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

August Direct Debits			
Name	**Reference**	**Description**	**Amount £**
Unity Bank		Service Charge	7.00
VALDA ENERGY		Electricity Charges	134.91
Daisy	5006994 25302452	Landline/Broadband	71.06
Daisy	4704835 25340108	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
Banking for May – July
Updated Scribe financial software with invoices/receipts May – July
Onboarding for Cllr Read
Updated Facebook and website with road closures and other resident notifications
Carpark permit renewals
Item preparation/research for meeting agenda
Insurance Renewal
Arrangements for Remembrance Sunday – road closure application, liaison with QHOF
123 reg domain hosting familiarisation and maintenance. Gave access to Clerk's calendar
Liaison with MBC – land transfers, parish seminar
Assisted residents, including with planning issues, allotment enquiries, parking permit fines, EV Chargers

Tasks in progress
In-box backlog
Savings Account Research
Looking into CIL expenditure
Updating signatories on Nationwide and Unity Bank accounts
Reviewing policies
Keeping calendar of statutory responsibilities for future Clerk

Tasks to be done
Look at audit report findings
Streamline paper files
Website Review
Update Asset Register with play equipment changes
Arrange meeting with Remembrance Sunday Stakeholders 2nd week in October
Arrange training for Cllr Read