

# SUTTON WALDRON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025 - held at The Village Hall.

## MINUTES

**Present –**

**Chair:** David Smith **PC Councillors:** John Ellis, Iain McNeil, Sandy Millard & Mike Asher

**Dorset Councillor:** Jane Somper (absent) **Clerk:** Sam Smith

**Residents:** Jane McNeil, Gill Samways, Christl Pearson, Steve Read, Ian Pinder, Walter Steward and Tony Asher.

**12/03/01 Apologies for absence:** Dick Hood & Roger Snowdon

**12/03/02 Declarations of Interest:** None

**12/03/03 Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of December 2024 were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.

**12/03/04 Matters Arising:**

**a. Village drain clearance** At the previous PC meeting in December, Saul Gittens offered to help clean out the village storm drains. Cllr Mc Neil reported that Saul had attempted to do this, but could only get so far with his rods, from then forwards the drains were blocked solid. The Clerk has contacted DC numerous times to request a visit from the drain cleaning vehicle and she will report this issue again.

**b. Spinney maintenance & bulb planting** Jane McNeil has planted blubs (in their pots) at the Spinney. A volunteer is needed to dig the holes to transplant them. The dead winter foliage and Goose Grass also needs removing. The new silicone bags seem to be suppressing the damp in the phone box. A new supply of books has appeared. A resident suggested that the box could be repainted, again a volunteer will need to come forward for the work to be completed. A 'round robin' email will be sent out to highlight both these issues and ask for volunteers.

**12/03/05 Correspondence/Other Parish Matters:**

**a. Report from Dorset Councillor** Jane Somper reported as follows –

**The Budget U-Turn** The Dorset Council budget process concluded at Full Council on 11th February. Last month, I raised concerns over proposed budget cuts, including nighttime parking charges, reduced funding for youth services, and the allocation of additional council tax revenue from second homes. My group proposed an amendment to reverse these cuts, but it was voted down. However, due to widespread opposition, a review of nighttime parking charges is now expected. Additionally, asset disposals are being considered to cover budget shortfalls, raising concerns about selling off key public assets, such as County Farms, which support young farmers and local food security. The budget report also lacks a dedicated line for addressing the Climate and Nature Emergency. With the council's net zero target brought forward by five years, adequate funding must be allocated. I will continue advocating for resources, particularly for flood prevention and community protection.

**Devolution Update** Dorset's bid for a devolution deal, in collaboration with Wiltshire, Somerset, and BCP, was unsuccessful. While a combined authority could have secured infrastructure funding, it also introduced additional bureaucracy. Dorset now has time to assess other areas' experiences before reapplying.

**Local Plan Progress** On 25th February, the Cabinet agreed to a new timeframe for the Local Plan, aligning with central government deadlines. The revised scheme will be published shortly, with consultation set for August 2026 and potential adoption in 2027. Given the tight timeline, it is crucial to stay informed and engage during consultations.

**Public Health Reorganisation** Following BCP Council's withdrawal from the joint public health arrangement, Dorset has appointed a new Director of Public Health and Prevention, effective April 2025. Public Health Dorset focuses on prevention, and I highly recommend taking advantage of services like LiveWell Dorset's health checks.

**Dorset Council's CEO Departure** After years of service, CEO Matt Prosser has left to become CEO of Wellington Council, New Zealand. Sam Crowe, Head of Public Health Dorset, will serve as interim CEO during the recruitment process. **Cllr Jane.Somper@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk**

**b. Inspection of The Spinney, Bus Shelter & Telephone Box** In accordance with the Risk Management Policy the Chairman confirmed the Spinney, the Bus Shelter and the Telephone Box had been inspected.

**c. Community Speed Watch** Gill Samways reported as follows – The week commencing the 7<sup>th</sup> April there will be a countywide SpeedWatch blitz run by the Police. Gill has been contacted by Maria Atwood (Police) asking for the serial number of the equipment and the date acquired. An invoice for the equipment is probably on its way to the PC.

**12/03/06 Planning Applications: P/TRC/2025/01055 The Old Rectory DT11 8PF** Willow - remove to ground level. London Plane - reduce secondary and tertiary branches overhanging the paddock by 1-2m. Ash - remove 1x broken limb. Confirmation Of Tree Preservation Order **TPO/2024/0056 Dorset Council Land at Fore Top, DT11 8PB** Tree Preservation Order 2024. New Tree Preservation Order **TPO/2025/0003 Dorset Council Land at The Old Chicken Shed, DT11 8RA** Tree Preservation Order 2025

**12/03/07 Finance:**

**a. Bills to be paid** It was agreed that the following should be paid:

S Smith <b>£142.90</b>	(Jan 2025 salary & expenses)
S Smith <b>£142.90</b>	(Feb 2025 salary & expenses)
S Smith <b>£169.29</b>	(March 2025 salary & expenses)
Dorset Council <b>£50.00</b>	(May 2024 election costs)
Lloyds Bank <b>£4.25</b>	(monthly bank charges)
Village Hall <b>£52.00</b>	(meeting hall hire 2024)

The reconciled bank and cash balance as of 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025 was **£4,478.64**

**12/03/08 AOB:** An email has been received by Cllr Smith with regards to the possibility installing car electric charging points in village – all Cllrs & residents agreed that this was not needed or suitable for our village. The PC has received a copy of a DC information leaflet with regards to vegetation/tree/hedge maintenance. The 30mph signs at the entrance to village are currently obscured by the hedge. The Clerk will report this issue to DC Highways. Since the last meeting Roger Snowdon has received notice that the Spinney is now registered with the Land Registry. The Village Hall lease is also now recorded correctly on its land registry documents. A big thank you to Martin Jelbart & Roger for managing this issue on the PCs behalf. A resident in attendance raised the issue of access to Napier’s Way. Cars/trucks are driving over the grass triangle because cars are parked irresponsibly on the junction. The Clerk will request a site visit from our DC Highways Community Officer to address this issue and the other highways issues in the village eg: the drains. Cllr McNeil will take some photos. Fingerpost roundel – Cllr McNeil to contact Roger Bond for advice. Cllr McNeil has had a roundel in storage since it was knocked over in a car collision. We need to look into the options, create/replace the old fingerpost or just restore the roundel and use it as a decorative/historical piece at the Village Hall?

**12/03/09 Reports:**

**Church** The Owen Jones painting restoration starts on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025, and during this restoration period the church will be shut to public. It is hoped that this work will be completed by the summer. The external work will commence in June, the Church should be fully re open by September 2025. In the meantime, Church meetings will be held in the Village Hall. At present there has been no change to the VAT reclaim rules, but this is due to be reviewed by the Government in March 2026.

**b. Village Hall** Jane McNeil reported the village walk will take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May. There will be an Easter Egg Hunt on Good Friday. Film nights are due to re commence in May.

**c. Footpaths** Jane McNeil will contact Dick Hood with regards to the new stile on the footpath leading to the Farringdon Road, it is quite hard to cross over, with it being so narrow. This could be fixed by cutting one of the posts.

**Date of next meeting:** The next meeting will be on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025 @ 7.30pm. (AGM & APM) Sutton Waldron Village Hall. There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.20pm.

**Signed by the Chairman .....** **Date.....**