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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on **Monday 15th December 2025 at 7.30pm** at South Brent Village Hall, Station Approach, South Brent TQ10 9JL.

Before the meeting there was an Open Forum for discussion with members of the public for 15 minutes for items not included on the agenda (each speaker has a maximum of five minutes at the discretion of the Chairman).

The Chairman requested that item Q be moved to follow item D. This was agreed.

Cllr. Richards noted that there needs to be an additional Finance meeting planned for the summer. Cllr. Rafiqi will liaise with the RFO to arrange this.

Members of the public were in attendance to discuss an upcoming planning application for additional houses at Palstone Lane. Currently, this application has not been submitted therefore the councillors are not able to discuss it further.

		Actions
A	Record of members present. Cllrs' Astal-Stain, Childs, Hanney, Hancock, Johnston, G. Pannell, Rafiqi, Richards and the clerk Sophie Jones. There were also 10 members of the public, the majority of which were in attendance to discuss planning applications 0386/25 DNPA and 0400/25 DNPA.	Noted
B	Apologies for absence and reason. To approve or not approve absences. Cllr. Fone – unwell Cllr. C. Pannell - unwell	All absences were approved
C	Declarations of interest (and their nature) regarding agenda items. Cllr. G. Pannell – all DNPA and SHDC planning applications.	Noted.
D	Consider the granting of dispensations in relation to item C above.	None.
E	Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda (including any comments from Councillors with a personal interest in an agenda item).	
F	Police report (crime and disorder reduction). It was noted that the police budgeting survey has been circulated.	Noted.
G	Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 17 th November 2025 and report matters arising (for information only). Item H needs to be amended to read 'Little Orchard will be closing.' Delete the rest of the sentence. Once amended, it was agreed the minutes could be signed.	The Chairman signed the minutes.
H	Chairman's update. It was noted that the Christmas light switch on went well. The council sends its congratulations and gratitude to all who were involved, and a special thanks to Zoe Richards.	Noted.
I	Report from South Hams District Councillors. * Cllr. Hancock circulated his report. He noted that the Local Government Reorganisation bid has been submitted.	Noted.
J	Report from Devon County Councillor. No report circulated.	No report.
K	Dartmoor National Park Authority Parish Council representatives report (Cllr. G. Pannell). Cllr. G. Pannell said they have gone through the selection process for the new Chief Executive. Work is ongoing with the new partnership plan.	Noted.
L	Highway matters and street cleaning. - To consider requesting a dog poo bin by Hope Wood. Cllr. G. Pannell suggested the clerk speaks to Rob Sekula at SHDC regarding this.	Action – Clerk to email Rob Sekula regarding this.

	- Vehicle Activated Signs at Palstone. Cllr. Hanney will action this. - Road safety concerns at Stidston Lane, South Brent. Clerk to follow up with Highways. It was also noted that New Orchard needs to be visited by Mark Bancroft to clear the pavement.	Action – Clerk to contact Highways regarding the drainage at Stidston Lane and contact The Outdoors School to ensure the traffic management plan is being adhered to.
M	Dementia Friendly Signage - To consider and approve payment of £235 + VAT for 3 replacement dementia friendly signs. Cllr. G. Pannell noted it is £265 + VAT due to delivery charge. County Councillor Thomas has agreed to support an application for £160 from the Locality Fund towards the cost of the new signs. SHDC Cllr. G. Pannell will support an application for £100 from his funds. Cllr. Childs proposed that the council proceed with the quote. This was seconded by Cllr. Astal-Stain and unanimously authorised. Cllr. G. Pannell abstained. It was noted at the recent Four Rivers Dementia Alliance meeting, South Brent were being held up as a shining example of moving forward with Dementia-friendly signage and accessibility.	Action – Clerk to apply for funding towards the dementia-friendly signage.
N	Parish Council committee and working group reports. i. Land & Estates Committee - To adopt the reviewed and updated Land & Estates committee Terms of Reference.* Item 5 needs to be swapped with item 4. It also must include that 'The Chairman will be appointed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting.' Once the amendments have been done, the Terms of Reference can be agreed. - To discuss vandalism and drainage issues at Sanderspool Toilets and possible repairs. Cllr. Childs proposed that this be deferred until the site meeting with James Friend in January 2026. ii. Christmas Lights Working Group - To adopt the reviewed and updated Christmas Lights working group Terms of Reference. * Amend to include 'The Chairman of the working group will be appointed at the Annual Parish Council meeting'. Once amended, the Terms of Reference can be agreed. iii. Open Spaces, Sports and Recreations Working Group - To adopt the reviewed and updated Open Spaces, Sports and Recreations working group Terms of Reference. * These were approved at the meeting on Monday 20th November 2025. Amend to read 'The Chairman of the meeting will be appointed at the Annual Parish Council meeting.' iv. Finance & HR Committee It was recommended in the October 2025 Finance & HR committee meeting that the full council - Adopt the reviewed and updated Risk Register. * The risk of Anti-virus should be moved to a separate line and upgraded to a medium risk level. Also, the 'responsibility of the council as an employer' impact should be medium risk. - Adopt the reviewed and updated Disciplinary Procedure. * Defer to September 2027. - Adopt the reviewed and updated Reserves Policy. * Cllr. Rafiqi proposed that the General Reserves level needs to be raised. Current policy states 3 months, this will gradually be increased to 6 months by 2029. This was unanimously approved.	Action – make amendments to Risk Register. Add to Council January Agenda

	v. It was recommended to the full council that £20,000 is granted to the Recreation Association for the repair of the skate park ramps. See circulated OSSR minutes and review. This was discussed at the Finance and HR meeting in December 2025. The recommendation is that the Rec will have a £30,000 budget line for 2026/27. £20,000 for staffing costs and a further £10,000 towards costs of projects/skate park, etc. Approved.		
O	To receive any updates from Council representatives on outside bodies, can be verbal or written and circulated in advance. Cllr. Hancock circulated a Link Councillor Report from South Brent Primary School. Cllr. Astal-Stain spoke with an upset parishioner regarding who owns the hedge at the allotments. Thanks are recorded to Cllr. Hancock and the primary school for the report.		Noted.
P	Clerk & administrative matters. i. General report on actions taken since last meeting for information only. * Clerk checked that all Councillors are on their emails now. Please report any ongoing issues to the Clerk to arrange support with Moortek. ii. Updates from NALC, DALC, SLCC and the civility and respect pledge.		Noted.
Q	Planning. Cllr. Childs handed chairmanship to Cllr. Richards		
	i. Applications		
	Application No	Detail	0386/25 DNPA – Cllr. Richards recommends refusal.
	0386/25 DNPA	Retrospective application for change of use of land to dog agility/training at Marshfield, Hillside, South Brent, TQ10 9AY Notes – South Brent Parish Council recommend refusal of this application on the grounds that it is unjustified commercial development in the open countryside detrimental to the amenities of the neighbouring properties. There are also concerns regarding the impact of parking.	This was seconded by Cllr. Childs and unanimously agreed. Cllr. G. Pannell abstained.
	0400/25 DNPA	Retrospective change of use from Class E (office) to Class C3 Residential (1 house) at 5 Station Road, South Brent, TQ10 9BE Notes – South Brent Parish Council recommend refusal of this application as it is a commercial building and has not yet been explored as a commercial business and is contrary to Policy 5.3 of the Dartmoor National Park Local Plan.	0400/25 DNPA – Cllr. Hancock recommends refusal. This was seconded by Cllr. Rafiqi and unanimously agreed. Cllr. G. Pannell abstained.
	0402/25 DNPA	Change of use of an agricultural building to flexible commercial use under Class R at Cornsclose, South Brent, TQ10 9J	0402/25 DNPA – no objections.
	0403/25 DNPA	Erection of agricultural barn, polytunnel, propagation tunnel, compost toilet, wildlife pond, bore hole and associated parking and works at Land adjacent to Tor View, South Brent, TQ10 9EG	0403/25 DNPA – Cllr. Hancock propose support of the application. This was seconded by Cllr. Childs and agreed by majority. Cllr. G. Pannell and Cllr. Richards abstained.
	ii. Amended applications		
	iii. Withdrawn applications		
	iv. Planning decisions		
	v. Planning appeals		
	vii. Tree applications TPO 25/0105 – exempt TPO 25/0104 – South Brent Parish Council have no objections. Cllr. Richards passed chairmanship back to Cllr. Childs.		

R	Finance. i. To receive report from RFO. * This was noted. ii. To consider the grant application from South Brent Storytellers and Archive for £250. * Cllr. Richards proposed the council award £250. This was seconded by Cllr. Childs and unanimously authorised, to come from Grant Aid budget. iii. To consider the grant funding request from Citizens Advice for between £300 to £500. * Cllr. Richards proposed the council award £500 from the Grant Aid budget. This was seconded by Cllr. Childs and unanimously authorised. iv. To consider the funding request from The Recreation Association for £390 for pruning of the trees. * Cllr. Childs proposed the council fund the tree pruning for £390 from Local Projects Budget. This was seconded by Cllr. G. Pannell and unanimously authorised. vi. To receive, approve and sign the bank reconciliation for December 2025. * The bank reconciliation was agreed and signed by the Chairman. vii. To receive year to date reports on budget spend percentage and monthly payments. * Noted. viii. To authorise December 2025 accounts for payment and to approve the counter signatory for these. * The payments for December 2025 were authorised. Cllr. G. Pannell will be counter signatory, if unavailable Cllr. Richards will action. ix. It was recommended in the December 2025 Finance & HR committee meeting that the Full Council approve the draft budget for 2026/2027. * Cllr. Richards proposed the council approve the draft budget of £153,816.35 and precept request of £112,066.00 for 2026/27. This was seconded by Cllr. Johnston and unanimously authorised. Thanks were given to Cllr. Rafiqi and the RFO for their hard work on this budget. Cllr. Richards proposed the meeting moves to Part 2. This was seconded by Cllr. Hanney and unanimously agreed.	Action – RFO to arrange payments and funding to ii. iii. Iv RFO to submit precept request
T	Part 2 i. Pursuant to Section 1(2) Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960, to resolve to exclude the public and press due the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. ii. Staff appraisals and recommendations. Cllr. Rafiqi noted there was no reason to not pursue the next increment of the pay scale to the RFO, which will be backdated to September. It was also noted the clerk needs to arrange appraisal. Cllr. Richards proposed that the increment be awarded to RFO as of the anniversary of her start date (September). This was seconded by Cllr. Astal-Stain and unanimously authorised. iii. To consider and set a specific pay date for the Clerk and RFO each month. Cllr. Richards proposed the 15th of each month should be the staff pay date. This was seconded by Cllr. Hancock and unanimously authorised. iv. To resolve re-admittance of public and press to the meeting.	
U	Items for future agendas Dates of next Parish Council meetings. - Monday 5th January 7.30pm – Finance & HR Committee meeting (will not be required) - Monday 12th January 7.30pm – Media and Land & Estates Committee meeting - Monday 19th January 7.30pm – Full Council meeting - Monday 9th February 7.30pm – Full Council meeting - Monday 2nd March 7.30pm – Land & Estates Committee meeting	