**Annual Parish Council Chairman’s Report 2025**

I am pleased to be able to give this Annual Parish Meeting my Parish Council Chairman’s report. I intend this year to keep it brief, bearing in mind that the monthly Sutton Newsletter and noticeboards have provided updates on Parish Council meetings and many other local activities throughout the year.

The Parish Council is fortunate to have a strong team of councillors who are committed and hardworking, all sharing the same ideology of working for our community. I want to thank all of you for your hard work throughout the year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our District Councillor, James Mallinder. He works very hard for the local community and is very approachable. I am very grateful for all the work that he does.

**Finance**

The role of Responsible Financial Officer is performed by our clerk, Mike Peates.

There has been no significant expenditure this past year beyond the usual running costs of the Parish Council. Going forward no significant expenditure is planned over the next 12 months. However, we must be mindful of the need for occasional maintenance expenditure to Parish assets like the bus shelters and the Speed Display (SID) which recently needed a new battery at a cost of approximately £100.

As always, we are committed to being prudent with public funds.

This leads me to the Parish Council precept (the council tax rate set by the Parish Council). This year saw a precept increase of 18% for the 2025-2026 period. This was the first increase for several years and was essential to prevent a shortfall in predicted spending for the coming period.

**Planning**

The role of reviewing planning applications is carried out by the Planning Sub-Committee. There have been no significant or contentious planning applications of note over the past 12 months. As ever, I am grateful for their hard work and expertise in what can be a time-consuming role.

**Joint Parish Traffic Initiative**

Much work has been undertaken over the past 12 months to better understand the significant pressures being put on our local road network. Most notably for us here on the peninsula the Bromeswell roundabout and route into Melton up to the A12. The construction of Sizewell C has entered an extremely busy phase and we also have large volumes of heavy vehicles using our local roads in connection with ongoing work at East Anglia One and Two solar farms. Large scale housing projects most notably in Rendlesham and Eyke as well as those in Martlesham are only adding to the problem. We are extremely fortunate to have Councillor Helen Cook, who has worked extremely hard over the past year, attending meetings and speaking on our behalf and regularly updating this Parish Council.

**ANPR/Speedwatch**

Once again I must give thanks to all the volunteers on the speedwatch team who have given up their free time over past year to carry our speed checks in the village. Letters are sent out to offending drivers by the local Constabulary.

Sutton is also part of a county initiative to use ANPR cameras to detect speeding vehicles. This small device is deployed for around one week and works 24/7. As per speedwatch offending drivers are sent a letter by the local Constabulary with appropriate advice!

These two initiatives have one sole aim. To educate drivers to the need to pay proper heed to speed limits for the safety of all road users and residents.

**Memorial Hall**

Sutton Memorial Hall is entirely independent of the Parish Council. As a charitable trust it is entirely self-funding and run by its own committee members. I must pay tribute to them for their tireless effort and dedication throughout the year to provide our parish with an essential space for the local community to come together and socialise. A big thank you to the many volunteers involved in running this keystone parish asset.

A big thank you to Sue Collins for the very popular parish newsletter which is distributed through the Parish every month.

May I, on behalf of us all, thank our Clerk, Mike Peates, who ensures we have a professional well run parish council, which has an increasingly large amount of work and responsibility. It is at the annual meeting when his work can be acknowledged by us all.

Finally, I would like to finish by thanking all the many volunteers in our community who give their time freely and are involved in the many activities taking place in the parish. I am sure we are all proud to be part of our wonderful parish of Sutton and as a community we will work hard to continue to support and help each other.

Alan McManus

Chair