



## DITCHLING PARISH COUNCIL

Ditchling Village Hall 18 Lewes Road Ditchling East Sussex BN6  
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### Minutes of the Ditchling Parish Council Meeting held at Ditchling Village Hall, Ditchling on Tuesday 27 June 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Madden (Chair), Sansom (Vice Chair), Farrands, Rowling, Orme, Barna, Jones and Ingham (from item 6).

Sarah Mamoany (Clerk)

#### Public Participation:

1 member of the public was present at the meeting and District Councillor Paul Mellor.

1.	<b>Apologies of absence</b> – Apologies were received from Cllr. Stapleton.	
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> No declarations of interest were made.	
2.	<b>To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 15 May 2023</b> The minutes of the meeting held on the 15 May 2023 were <b>resolved</b> and duly signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the meeting.	
3.	<b>Actions from previous minutes</b>  Tom Warder (Sussex Community Housing Hub/Action in Rural Sussex) had advised that the feasibility study in respect of Ditchling Gardens will not be available for the meeting and sent his apologies, the report will be available for the July meeting.  A meeting has been held with the Scouts on the 26 June in relation to them vacating the premises in August.  As agreed at the previous meeting an email and document were sent in respect of the 'permission to dig' in Farm Lane from the broadband providers. It was noted the work was being completed this week.  The playground survey has gone live, with 96 responses to date. This has been promoted in the Ditchling Community Ad magazine, the noticeboard, post office and a copy has been sent to the primary school and they are adding the information to their newsletter.  A meeting has been arranged with Ditchling Climate Action Network for the 11 July at 2pm. Cllrs. Madden, Barna and Rowling have confirmed their attendance.  An introductory meeting was held with District Councillor Paul Mellor on the 19 July with Cllr. Madden and the Clerk in attendance.  A meeting has been arranged with Ditchling Football Club on the 26 July to discuss the changes within the club and the forthcoming season.	

	<p>A request to use an inflatable obstacle course for an event being held at the pavilion has been received and this has been agreed subject to the event organisers arranging the required insurance and risk assessment, which will include the inflatable being managed by adults at all times and it will be deflated by 9pm.</p> <p>The History Project made contact with the Parish Council and Village Hall Committee in relation to the notice board that is located on Lewes Road which the Council use as well as the notice board in the High Street. They wished to take this over and have funds to refurbish the board. This used to belong to the Traders Association, which is no longer in existence. Therefore, it was agreed by the Village Hall Committee that they could take over the board and therefore the Council will just have the one notice board in the High Street to display notices. The key has been passed to the History Project representative.</p> <p>It was suggested that the Council consider having a notice board outside the Parish Council office and the Clerk will contact the Village Hall Committee regarding this matter.</p>	Clerk
5.	<p><b>Clerks Report</b></p> <p>The Clerk's report was circulated and noted.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Planning - for full details of planning applications listed below please go to <a href="https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-applications/">https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-applications/</a> or <a href="https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control">https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control</a></b></p> <p>The Council <b>resolved</b> the following comments:</p> <p><b>6.1 SDNP/23/02145/APNW - Field to The East of Lodge Lane, Keymer, Ditchling - Engineering operations associated with the construction of the livestock barn previously approved under SDNP/22/04089/APNB</b></p> <p>It was noted this application has been approved and no comment was made.</p> <p><b>6.2 SDNP/23/02190/CND 20 Nevill Cottages Ditchling BN6 8UT - Variation of Condition 2 (Plans) related to Planning Approval SDNP/22/03243/HOUS to include addition of a first-floor rear bedroom - No comment.</b></p> <p><b>6.3 SDNP/23/02411/HOUS - Radley Common Lane Ditchling BN6 8TN - Erection of two storey front extension</b></p> <p>The Council noted that they have no objection to the application but would like to highlight sustainability and the appropriate SDNP policy would be used to comment.</p> <p><b>6.4 SDNP/23/02512/TPO - Dumbrells Court North End Ditchling BN6 8TG – Various tree work detailed on application – No comment.</b></p> <p><b>6.5 Any other applications received since publication of the agenda.</b></p> <p>No further applications were received.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Car Park Project</b></p> <p><b>7.1 Update on car park and associated costs</b></p> <p>The site lines onto Keymer Road have been checked again and following some further cutting back of the grass, photographs were sent to and approved by ESCC Highways. The Council will need to ensure that the grass/hedge is kept cut back during the growing season.</p> <p>The soft landscape contractors attended site on the 20 June – following a visit to the site the Clerk has reported back to Gould Baxter that the works are unsatisfactory and requested that the landscape consultants HBA make a visit to site to advise further. The Council noted that they would expect the contractor to pay for any site visits from HBA as these would not have been required if the works had been completed to a satisfactory standard and within the original timelines.</p> <p><b>7.2 To approve final valuation payment certificate in respect of contract</b></p> <p>It was noted that no further payment certificate would be due other than for the top dressing until all defects identified at the end of the 12-month rectification period had been remedied. To date the payment certificate for the top dressing has not been received.</p>	Clerk

	<p><b>7.3 To consider quotes for additional channel drainage</b></p> <p>The Clerk reported she had been in contact with a contractor and was hopeful they would be able to provide a quotation. The Council <b>resolved</b> that they would delegate the decision to proceed with any quote to the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk with expenditure of up to a maximum of £2,500 so that the work could proceed.</p>	Clerk/ Chair/ Vice Chair
8.	<p><b>Recreation Ground &amp; Burial Ground</b></p> <p><b>8.1 To consider request from Ditchling Cricket Club in respect of boundary net fencing</b></p> <p>A meeting was held with a representative of the Cricket Club, Cllr. Rowling and the Clerk in respect of a request from a resident whose property was on the boundary of the recreation ground relating to them asking the Cricket Club to put up a net to protect them from cricket balls coming into their garden, a report had been circulated. The Council <b>resolved</b> that they would not be supportive of a 6-meter boundary net on the eastern boundary of the cricket outfield.</p> <p><b>8.2 To consider request for financial contribution to Ditchling Cricket Club towards outfield cutting</b></p> <p>The Cricket Club were requesting a financial contribution of £300 towards cutting the outfield earlier in the season, as due to the ground being so wet the Council's contractors had not cut the area and the grass had become overgrown on the outfield. The Council <b>resolved</b> to contribute £300 as a goodwill gesture which would be deducted from the hire fees for the 2023 season.</p> <p>It was noted that the Council need to review hire fees and the grass cutting contract at the recreation ground moving forwards. Sports clubs would need to be given 6 months' notice of any increases.</p> <p><b>8.3 To review and approve groundman's hut lease with Ditchling Cricket Club</b></p> <p>The Clerk had circulated a draft of the groundman's hut lease prior to the meeting. Cllr. Stapleton had highlighted concerns in respect of if the Council wished to develop this area within the next 25 years as there was no break clause in the lease. The Clerk informed the Council she had approached the Cricket Club and they advised that a break clause was not something that they wished to engage with, noting that they had spent out £30,000 on refurbishing the building. The Council <b>resolved</b> that they would delegate Cllrs. Sansom and Stapleton to consider the lease including a break clause that would involve the Council providing an alternative storage facility and a clause in respect of if the Club moved to another location to play that they would not be able to continue to use the facility for storage. The Clerk recommended that a meeting with the Cricket Club to talk through any suggested amendments would be useful before the Council incurred any further solicitors' fees in respect of amending the lease.</p> <p>The solicitors have also advised that the Council need to advertise in accordance with s127 of the Local Government Act 1972 and obtain a certificate from Sport England as per the restrictions that are detailed on the deed of dedication 2015.</p> <p><b>8.4 To review signage for recreation ground and associated costs</b></p> <p>Following a complaint by a resident in respect of people parking across the access gate in the Farm Lane entrance to the recreation ground a revised sign was put forward to the Council for approval which would be attached to the gate. The Council <b>resolved</b> to order the new sign with some minor amendments at the cost of £45 plus VAT.</p> <p><b>8.5 To consider replacement of bench located at end of East End Lane</b></p> <p>A bench at the end of East End Lane had been reported as being unsafe and following an inspection the Clerk was advised it was beyond repair. The Council <b>resolved</b> that they would contact the Monday Group to see if it was salvageable and if they would be in a position to take on the refurbishment of the bench if the Council paid for the materials.</p> <p><b>8.6 To sign Deed of Grant applications</b></p> <p>One application had been received which the Council <b>resolved</b> and was signed as required.</p> <p><b>8.7 To consider quotations for tree surveys at recreation ground</b></p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk/Cllr. Sansom/ Cllr. Stapleton</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

	<p>The Clerk reported that some emergency work had been carried out on the large mature ash tree near to the playground at the cost of £288 plus VAT.</p> <p>A quote had been received for a full tree survey at the cost of £1,200 plus VAT and it was noted the last full survey had been completed in June 2022. Therefore, another option for the Council would be to get the high-risk trees surveyed and a quote for this to include a climbing inspection of the large mature ash was £280 plus VAT. The Council <b>resolved</b> to accept the quote for the high-risk trees and look to carry out a full survey in 2024.</p> <p>A quote was also received in respect of the Norway spruce in the playground area, for a ground level decay evaluation as concerns have been raised in respect of the tree decaying and this could pose a danger in a highly used area. The Council <b>resolved</b> to proceed with this work at the cost of £432.50 plus VAT as it was felt that due to the proximity of the playground that it was necessary to establish the condition of the tree.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
9.	<p><b>Traffic &amp; Highways</b></p> <p><b>9.1 Update on Traffic consultancy project and associated costs</b></p> <p>The Clerk had reported that the Council is in receipt of the Phase 2 report which is still awaiting approval by ESCC Highways. A Traffic Committee meeting will be held on the 17 July to review the documents for recommendations to the Council.</p> <p>It was noted that the Council had received an email from the traffic consultants in respect of fees and that additional hours have been carried out on the project but without advising the Council in advance. It was indicated that a figure of £4,000 would cover the further work that was completed on the project which was due to more detail being included and a higher quantity of potential highway improvement measures than was originally anticipated at the outset. The Clerk advised in her capacity as Responsible Finance Officer that she would not recommend the Council paid any additional fees as the Council had accepted a quote in good faith for the works and it was not acceptable for any business to submit a claim for additional work without any sort of advance notice being given that this work was required. The Council <b>resolved</b> that whilst they sympathized with the situation, the Council has to operate under its financial regulations and was not in a position to make any additional payments in respect of this matter.</p> <p><b>9.2 To review and approve traffic report paper in respect of mitigation from development outside the Parish and discuss next steps</b></p> <p>Cllr. Orme had prepared a paper which was circulated which was to suggest the Council should support the idea to seek further Section 106 funds from developers outside the Parish including Hassocks, Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath and Wivelsfield. The Council <b>resolved</b> the content of the paper and the Clerk would write to Hassocks, Wivelsfield, Westmeston and Streat to gain their support. This would also have to get support from the District and County Councillors.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
10.	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p><b>10.1 To approve schedule of payments for June 2023</b></p> <p>The schedule of payments for the sum of £10,800.70 was <b>resolved</b> by the Council.</p> <p><b>10.2 To approve bank reconciliations</b></p> <p>The bank reconciliations had been circulated to all Councillors, Cllr. Orme confirmed that he had signed off the bank reconciliations and seen all the invoices for payment. The Council <b>resolved</b> the bank reconciliations for the 31.05.2023.</p> <p><b>10.3 To note correspondence from external auditor</b></p> <p>It was reported that the Council received an email from the external auditor advising them they had received challenge correspondence from a member of the public in respect of the 2022/23 AGAR. This information must be considered prior to the completion of the external auditors work on the AGAR. The external auditor advised that any additional work they carry out as a result of this work will need to be met by the Council.</p>	

	<p><b>10.4 CPRE – Campaign to Protect Rural England – to review and agree membership fee</b> The Council <b>resolved</b> to agree to the increase in membership fees by direct debit from £36 a year to £60 a year.</p> <p><b>10.5 To note insurance arrangements for 2023/24</b> The Clerk confirmed that the insurance cost for the year was £2,229.74 which had been paid due to the insurance expiry date being the 31 May 2023. The Scout Hut was excluded from the policy as confirmation was received by the Scouts that it was insurance at the correct value. It was noted that an additional premium would be due once the Scouts had vacated as it would be the Councils responsibility to insure the building.</p>	
<p><b>11. Correspondence and Consultations</b> <b>11.1 Report from MP</b> <b>11.2 Ditchling Beacon and Commons – Car Park Underhill Lane Ditchling</b></p>	<p>This was circulated and noted.</p> <p>Cllr. Rowling had received correspondence from the Ditchling Beacon and Commons in respect of they were keen to see the car park in Underhill Lane being repaired as it was a well-used access point to the downs and their land and Cllr. Rowling had attended a meeting with them, County Councillor Sarah Osbourne and officers from SDNP and ESCC. It was noted although the car park is owned by ESCC they will not fund repairs as it is not a priority but they would support applications for match funding. Cllr. Rowling advised that the Council had no funds but would potentially support the project to improve it in principle. The matter was discussed further and it was noted that perhaps the area should be considered as a suitable rewilding area rather than continuing the use of a car park now that the new Parish Council car park was open as well. The issue of fly tipping in this location also seemed to be a problem. Cllr. Rowling will report back to the Ditchling Beacon and Commons on the discussion held.</p> <p><b>11.3 Consultation – SDNP Local List for Validation of SDNP Development Management Applications</b> This was circulated and no comments were made.</p> <p><b>11.4 To appoint representative on Inter Parish Planning Group</b> It was <b>resolved</b> for Cllr. Rowling to be appointed as the Inter Parish Planning Group representative.</p>	<p>Cllr. Rowling</p>
<p><b>12. Reports from representatives on outside bodies, events and training</b></p>	<p>Cllr. Barna advised that she had completed the Carbon Literacy Qualification and noted that the Council have a responsibility to act where possible on these matters.</p> <p>Cllr. Orme advised he attended the ESALC Councillor training, which covered many topics.</p>	
<p><b>13. Staffing Committee</b> <b>Please note item 13.2 will be held under the ‘Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 S.1(2) which will exclude members of the public due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed</b> <b>13.1 To review membership of Staffing Committee</b></p>	<p>The Council <b>resolved</b> the Committee membership as follows: Cllr. R. Sansom (Chair), Cllr. M. Madden and Cllr. E. Rowling.</p> <p><b>13.2 Report from Staffing Committee</b> This item is minuted in a confidential report.</p>	
<p><b>14. Future meeting dates</b></p>	<p>Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday, 31 July 2023 at 7pm It was noted no meeting will be held in August.</p>	

The meeting closed at 21:06 hrs.

## Schedule of payments for June 2023

Date Paid	Payee Name	Amount	Transaction Detail
31/05/2023	Survey Hero	348.00	subscription fees survey software
31/05/2023	Post Office	2.65	postage
31/05/2023	Post Office	2.39	postage
31/05/2023	Adobe	13.14	software
01/06/2023	InReach	45.60	photocopier
01/06/2023	Ditchling Village Hall	42.50	hall hire fees
01/06/2023	Vision ICT	60.00	website certificate renewal
01/06/2023	Ditchling Village Hall	57.50	hall hire fees
01/06/2023	Gallagher	2,229.74	insurance
01/06/2023	Lewes District Council	38.40	bin emptying
01/06/2023	RA Country Services Ltd	100.00	football pitch cut
01/06/2023	ESALC	48.00	Councillor training
01/06/2023	Barcombe Landscapes Ltd	2,220.00	mowing April/May
01/06/2023	Vision ICT Ltd	21.60	email account hosting
01/06/2023	Extrastar ElectricalAmazon	10.99	extension lead for office
01/06/2023	Henry Squire Amazon	23.50	padlock recreation ground
06/06/2023	Post Office	4.45	postage
06/06/2023	Lewes District Council	48.00	bin emptying fees
27/06/2023	East Sussex Pension Fund	543.50	staff pensions
27/06/2023	HMRC	583.43	June PAYE
27/06/2023	Staff salaries	2,011.59	Staff salaries June
30/06/2023	Lewes District Council	280.80	dog bin emptying fees
30/06/2023	Lewes District Council	98.41	burial ground bin emptying fee
25/06/2023	Bonny's Wood	288.00	emergency work to make ash tree safe
26/06/2023	Kitman	84.00	emergency IT call out office PC
26/06/2023	SGK Woodley	1,558.51	mowing/repairs rec car park and bridge
26/06/2023	SGK Woodley	36.00	car park cutting back hedge/grass
<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>10,800.70</b>	