



DITCHLING PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Ditchling Parish Council Meeting held at Ditchling Village Hall, Ditchling on Tuesday 27th February 2024 at 7pm

Present: Cllrs Barna, Farrands, Madden (Chair), Orme, Rowling, Sansom.

Tracey Euesden (Clerk)

Public Participation:

Lewes District Councillor Paul Mellor and 24 members of the public were present.

1.	Apologies for absence. Cllrs Ingham (Work Commitments) and Stapleton (Personal). The apologies were ACCEPTED . Cllr Madden later reported that Cllr Jones had resigned.
2.	Declarations of interest. Cllr Orme (item 6.5 SDNP/23/04864)
3.	To approve the minutes of the meetings held on the 23rd January 2024. The Minutes were APPROVED and signed by the Chair.
4.	Actions from previous minutes. Min. 7 – Car Park – meeting to finalise soft landscaping requirements to be arranged. Hedge has been cut back. Min. 15.2 – SDNP CIL – Expressions of Interest to be submitted for Playground Project and for Traffic Calming Measures Min. 15.5 – Lewes and Eastbourne Planning Policy Consultation. Response submitted.
5.	Clerks Report: The Clerk's Report had been circulated with the Agenda Papers.
6.	Planning - for full details of planning applications listed below please go to https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-applications/ or https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control The Council RESOLVED the following comments. 6.1 LW/24/0044 – Lone Oak Farm, Spatham Lane. Continuous use of static home as a dwelling for a period in excess of 4 years. It was noted that this property had been subject to various planning applications over the years. As this particular application was for a Lawful Development Certificate it was RESOLVED: To submit a COMMENT that evidence should be established that the property has been an agricultural workers' dwelling for the requisite period of time and that a condition be attached that it must remain so in order to comply with the Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston Neighbourhood Plan that restricts new dwellings to within the settlement boundary. 6.2 SDNP/23/05134/FUL – Ditchling Rugby Club. Engineering works to consist of re-profiling of site and realignment of pitch, new drainage system, creation of new access from Clayton Road leading to a new parking area, erection of groundsman's store/facilities, associated landscaping and extension to the existing allowed playing season. Members had heard arguments for and against the development during the public participation period prior to the meeting. Whilst the Parish Council is fully

	<p>supportive of the Club’s objectives to enhance and improve community facilities, provide outdoor sport and childrens’ activities, Councillors could not ignore the constraints of this application particularly with regard to its location in the Ditchling-Keymer Settlement Gap, the impact of the development upon the local Downs landscape, the size of the proposed 133 space car park with access from the B2112 Clayton Road, lack of mitigation of the effects of climate change and the design of the Groundsman’s Store which is at odds with local vernacular buildings. Various policies contained with the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan were cited and Members expressed a preference to work with the Rugby Club and other Sporting Clubs to explore the shared use of alternative facilities at the recreation ground. It was RESOLVED: to OBJECT to the application in its current form on the grounds noted above but to open dialogue with the Club to explore ways to achieve their objectives.</p> <p>6.3 SDNP/24/00353/TPO – Dumbrells Court. Various tree works. It was RESOLVED: To submit a comment of NO COMMENT.</p> <p>6.4 SDNP/24/00448/FUL – 50 Lewes Road. Demolition of existing bungalow and garage, erection of a replacement single-storey dwelling and outbuilding and associated works. It was RESOLVED: To Submit comments that the application should have more consideration for SDNP Core Policy SD2 relating to sustainability. Cllr Barna agreed to provide some wording for submission.</p> <p>6.5 SDNP/23/04864/FUL – 56 Lewes Road. Amended Plans. It was noted that these amendments had been submitted in effort to resolve objections raised by the Highways Department regarding access, parking spaces and accessibility for large vehicles such as delivery and rubbish collection vehicles. It was noted that these amendments have not fully satisfied the Highways Department who have resubmitted their comments of Objection. It was RESOLVED: To reiterate the Parish Council’s OBJECTION to the application citing the original concerns raised.</p> <p>6.6 SDNP/24/00516/TCA – Old Meeting House. Field Maple – fell and replace nearby with different variety. This application was discussed and concerns were raised about the adverse impact the removal of this tree would have on the street scape. As no arboricultural report had been submitted with the application, Members were unable to ascertain whether there were any safety issues that called for the felling of the tree and in the absence of any safety issues, preference would be for a crown reduction and extensive pruning. It was RESOLVED: To submit a COMMENT to this effect.</p> <p>6.7 SDNP/24/00382/TCA – 4 South Street. T1 Pittosporum – Remove It was RESOLVED: To submit a comment of NO COMMENT.</p> <p>6.8 SDNP/24/00604/HOUS – 18 South Street. Removal of existing carport and replacement with double garage, along with the creation of new site access through a section of the existing hedging and flint wall. The application was discussed and It was RESOLVED: To submit a comment of OBJECTION on the following grounds; the height of the proposed garage would have an overbearing effect on the streetscape and unacceptable access onto the already narrow road.</p> <p>6.9 SDNP/24/00700/TPO -15 The Dymocks. T1 Oak – Reduce crown to previous pruning points – general pruning to improve light and reduce overhang to neighbouring property. It was RESOLVED: To submit a comment of NO COMMENT.</p>
7.	<p>Car Park Project update.</p> <p>7.1 The Clerk reported that a meeting was to be arranged to discuss the final soft landscaping works.</p> <p>7.2 Interpretation Board. Cllr Rowling has been working with the SDNPA’s preferred designer to draw up plans for the board and hoped to be in a position to submit designs and costings for consideration at the next meeting.</p>

8.	<p>Ditchling Gardens</p> <p>8.1 It was reported that meetings were being arranged with AirS who had recently reintroduced its Rural Community Housing Service and also with a Chartered Surveyor (Planning and Development) to explore how the Council might proceed in the event that a social housing development proves to be unachievable. Other Agents would also be approached for estimates to act for the Council.</p>
9.	<p>Finance</p> <p>9.1 To approve schedule of payments for February 2024. The schedule of Payments and supplementary schedule of Payments consisting of two invoices that had been received since the publication of the agenda was APPROVED.</p> <p>9.2 To approve bank reconciliations for December. Cllr Orme reported that all of the Council's Accounts had been reconciled to 31st January 2024 and the documents were NOTED.</p> <p>9.3 To Review and Consider External Auditor's Final Report and decide what, if any, action is required. 2023 2024. It was NOTED that the External Auditor reported that Section 1, Assertion 2 has been incorrectly completed. The correct response should have been "No" in relation to non-compliance with financial regulations in respect of bank reconciliations. The Council's attention was also drawn to the fact that challenge correspondence was received in relation to the 2022/2023 AGAR which was considered before the report could be completed. The Council has received an invoice in relation to this additional work.</p> <p>9.4 To Consider Offer of 3 year engagement term from Mulberry & Co. for the provision of Internal Auditor Services at a fixed rate of £65 per hour. It was RESOLVED to Accept the offer.</p>
10.	<p>Recreation Ground & Burial Ground</p> <p>10.1 Update on Playground Project from Cllr Farrands. Cllr Farrands reported that the working party met on 15th February. The next stage of the project is to draw up a tender document and the Clerk was tasked to contact Lewes District Council for advice. Cllr Farrands confirmed that the current project comprises of the playground upgrade (Area to be slightly widened by approximately 3 metres) and replacement basketball / football wall. At this stage there are no plans to install a tennis hitting wall although this may be considered as part of the master plan for the recreation ground. Local residents would be kept informed of progress and consulted on the final designs.</p> <p>10.2 Update on Burial Ground Mapping Project. Work has commenced and good progress has been made on the Memorial Garden. Further updates will be provided and the revised Burial Ground Policy will be drafted in time for the next meeting.</p>
11.	<p>Traffic Consultation Update</p> <p>11.1 A total of 203 survey responses and communications have been received and these will be analysed with a view to a full report of the results being submitted at a future meeting (March or April).</p>
12.	<p>Documents for Review.</p> <p>12.1 Standing Orders – It was RESOLVED that Cllr Orme and the Clerk would review the NALC Model Standing Orders and provide a document for consideration and adoption at the next meeting.</p>
13.	<p>Trees</p> <p>13.1 To Approve quotation from Bonny's Wood of £1,200 plus VAT to carry out Tree Survey at the Recreation Ground. It was RESOLVED to Approve the quotation.</p>
14.	<p>Correspondence and consultations</p> <p>14.1 Since the last meeting, the Clerk has responded to one complaint and two requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.</p>
15.	<p>Upcoming Events.</p>

	<p>15.1 Ditchling Village Association – Newcomers’ Party – 13th April 2024. The Council would have an information stand at this event and Cllr Rowling agreed to review the publicity used for previous events.</p> <p>15.2 Ditchling Fair 2024 – 15th June 2024. It was not considered appropriate to have a stand at this event but cllrs would attend</p> <p>15.3 Request for use of Recreation Ground Car Park for annual cycling event – Sunday 24th March – Request APPROVED.</p> <p>15.4 D Day 80th Anniversary - 6th June 2024. The Clerk is liaising with the Royal British Legion, Ditchling Branch regarding commemorations and reported that repairs would be required to the lights at the War Memorial.</p>
16.	Parish Office and Staffing Matters. No matters raised.
17.	Future meeting date: 26 th March 2024.
18.	<p>Actions taken forward.</p> <p>Outstanding from previous meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Min. 15.2 – SDNP CIL – Expressions of Interest to be submitted for Playground Project and for Traffic Calming Measures (TE) <p>From this Meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Min. 7.1 - Meeting to be arranged to discuss the final soft landscaping works. (TE) • Min. 7.2 - Interpretation Board. Designs and costings to be submitted for consideration at the next meeting. (ER) • Min. 11.1 – Results of Traffic Survey to be analysed and reported upon. (RO, RS, JB, TE) • Min. 12.1 – Standing Orders – Document to be submitted for Adoption at the next meeting. (RO, TE) • Min. 15.1 – Publicity material to be reviewed. (ER) • Min. 15.4 – War Memorial Lights – Repairs to be arranged. (TE)

The meeting closed at 8.28 pm