



DITCHLING PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Annual Ditchling Parish Council Meeting held at Ditchling Village Hall, Ditchling on Tuesday 28th May 2024

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

Tracey Euesden (Clerk)

Public Participation:

16 members of the public were present at the meeting including 3 candidates for the vacancies.

1.	Election of Chairman and signing of Declaration of Office Cllr. M. Madden was proposed as Chair by Cllr. Orme and seconded by Cllr. Sansom. It was RESOLVED that Cllr. Madden was elected as Chairman and the Declaration of Office was signed and witnessed by the Clerk.
2.	Election of Vice Chairman and signing of Declaration of Office Cllr. R. Sansom was proposed as Vice Chair by Cllr. Stapleton and seconded by Cllr. Barna and it was RESOLVED that Cllr. Sansom was elected as Vice Chair and the declaration of office was signed and witnessed by the Clerk.
3.	Co-option – To receive written applications for the office of Parish Councillor and to Co-opt candidates to fill those vacancies. Members had been provided with applications from Messrs., Godley, Linstead and Seddon and in the absence of any objections, they were each invited to join the meeting. Messrs. Godley, Linstead and Seddon each signed a Declaration of Acceptance of officer and were welcomed as Members of the Parish Council.
4.	Apologies of absence – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Ingham. District Councillor Mellor had also extended his apologies
5.	To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 23rd April 2024. The minutes of the meeting were APPROVED and duly signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the meeting.
6.	Actions from previous minutes Min 12.2 (March 2024) Draft Burial Ground Policy – Comments invited. Min 7.2 – Interpretation Board – Cllr Rowling to share final design once received. Min 10.1 – Playground Project – See agenda item 10.2 Min 10.2 - Burial Ground Mapping Project – Awaiting response from Pear Technology. Min 13.1 – Streetlights – see agenda item 15.1
7.	Clerk’s report. The Clerk’s report had been circulated with the agenda papers.
8.	<i>At the Chair’s discretion and with the agreement of the meeting, Agenda item number 15 was brought forward.</i> Streetlights. 8.1 To Consider proposals regarding repairs and replacement lanterns. The Clerk had circulated a document drafted by Cllr Sansom containing proposals relating to the repair and maintenance of the streetlights. Following inspections of each of the streetlights carried out by Cllrs. Sansom and Ingham, a total of 19 lights have been identified as not working and requiring new lanterns. The possibility of obtaining quotes from suppliers other than the County Council’s chosen contractor was raised and it was suggested that these formal quotations would be

	<p>required prior to allocation of unbudgeted funds. Cllr Sansom reported that he and the Clerk were due to meet with the County Council's contractor on 29th May and that the matters discussed would be raised. A revised proposal and formal quotation for the replacement of the inoperable lanterns would be obtained and presented at the June meeting.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Election of Committee Membership, to include Chairman and Vice Chairman and Representatives on Outside Bodies The following appointments were RESOLVED</p> <p>9.1 Recreation Ground and Burial Ground Committee. Following discussion, it was DECIDED That this committee would be disbanded</p> <p>9.2 Finance Committee. Cllrs. Orme, Madden, Ingham and Farrands.</p> <p>9.3 Traffic Committee Cllrs. R. Stapleton, Farrands, Barna and Orme.</p> <p>9.4 Car Park Working Party. Following discussion, it was DECIDED That this working party would be disbanded</p> <p>9.5 Planning Working Party Cllrs. Rowling, Orme, Stapleton and Ingham</p> <p>9.6 Playground Working Party Cllrs. Farrands, Sansom, Linstead and Rowling plus resident representatives.</p> <p>9.7 Ditchling Gardens Working Party Cllrs. Rowling, Orme, Madden and Stapleton</p> <p>9.8 Ditchling Village Hall Management Committee Representative Cllr. Ingham</p> <p>9.9 Ditchling Village Association Representative Cllr. Madden</p> <p>9.10 Ditchling Pavilion Club Representative Cllr. Farrands</p> <p>9.11 Lewes District Association of Local Councils Representative Cllrs. Madden and Stapleton</p> <p>9.12 East Sussex Local Council Association (ESALC) Representatives Cllrs. Madden and Rowling</p> <p>9.13 South Downs National Park Authority Representative Cllr. Rowling</p> <p>9.14 South Downs National Park Authority Board Representative – East Sussex Cllr. Rowling</p> <p>9.15 Oldland Windmill Trust Trustee To be confirmed</p> <p>9.16 Staffing Committee Cllrs. Madden, Rowling and Sansom</p>

<p>10.</p>	<p>Planning The following Applications were discussed.</p> <p>10.1 LW/24/0296 – Little Crank, Common Lane. Retention of replacement rear window; and application for replacement of existing front fenestration, repointing works to the existing chimneys, replacement of existing pitched and flat roof coverings, and replacement of tile hanging and timber cladding to the existing dormer cheek walls. It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT.</p> <p>10.2 SDNP/24/01957/FUL – 16 South Street. Construction of a car port over existing car parking spaces. Members considered that the proposed design is not in keeping with the conservation area and It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of OBJECTION.</p> <p>10.3 LW/24/0354 – Mid Sussex Golf Club. Provision of 4no. Padel courts (Class F2) with ancillary office unit, casual seating area, provision of vehicle parking area, bicycle storage and soft landscaping. Comments were made in relation to the significant increase in traffic volume, noise, pollution and detrimental effects upon the natural habitat. The site is adjacent to the South Downs National Park and the introduction of floodlights would adversely affect its Dark Skies policy. The proposals are considered an example of urbanisation of the countryside and climate change has not been addressed. It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of OBJECTION.</p> <p>10.4 SDNP/24/01794/HOUS – Long Barn, Common Lane. Single storey side extension and replacement fenestration at all elevations. Cllr Stapleton declared an interest in this application and therefore did not take part in the discussion. It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT.</p> <p>10.5 LW/22/0517 – Hurst Farm, Hurstwood Lane, Haywards Heath. Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access for the erection of up-to 375 new homes, a two-form entry primary school, burial ground, allotments, open space with associated infrastructure, landscaping, and parking areas. Cllr Orme described this application as a prime example of development proposals in local proximity which will result in a significant increase on traffic in Ditchling. Concerns were raised that this, coupled with other residential development proposed in Mid - Sussex and Lewes District to the north and west of Ditchling, would adversely impact upon the health and social well-being of Ditchling residents, and the natural, built and historic environment of the village. It was suggested that the Parish Council should call for Mid-Sussex and Lewes Districts to consider the cumulative effect of this current application and of other proposed developments and request that, should applications such as this be approved, financial contributions should be sought from the developers towards traffic mitigation measures. It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of OBJECTION on these grounds.</p> <p>Notice of Appeal</p> <p>10.6 SDNP/23/04466/HOUS – 8 High Street. Appeal against refusal of planning consent. The Appeal was NOTED.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Recreation Ground & Burial Ground</p> <p>11.1 Update on Sinkhole at Recreation Ground. Southern Water has engaged a contractor to carry out the repairs. These works could take up to 3 weeks to be completed. The Clerk was asked to enquire with the Public Health Authority and with Southern Water, about its obligations regarding the potential for long term contamination and the health and safety of the community.</p> <p>11.2 Playground Project Update. The tender process is underway and site visits are being arranged for potential contractors. A discussion took place regarding the requirement for the</p>

	<p>winning bidder to have regard the potential noise and privacy impacts upon neighbouring residents and whilst it was noted that the tender specification does not call for noisy equipment or apparatus over 4m, the ambient sounds of a playground and community open space cannot be mitigated.</p>
12.	<p>Documents for Annual Review.</p> <p>12.1 Financial Regulations – To Consider requirement for dual control online banking. Council was advised that new regulations have been published by the National Association of Local Councils and Cllr Orme will review these with the Clerk with the intention of submitting a new document for approval at a future meeting. Cllr Orme described the current process for the approval of payments and this was considered sufficient for the council's requirements so dual control online banking is not required at this time.</p> <p>12.2 To Consider instructing the Clerk to draft the following policies for review and adoption at a future meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy for dealing with the press and media. The Clerk was asked to draft a brief policy. ▪ Employment Policies to include discipline and grievance. As the Clerk is the only member of staff and has a contract of employment based upon the National Association of Local Council's model template, it was not considered necessary to draw up these separate policies.
13.	<p>Finance</p> <p>13.1 To approve schedule of payments for May 2024. The schedule of payments for May were APPROVED.</p> <p>13.2 To Receive Bank Reconciliations for April 2024. Cllr. Orme had reviewed the reconciliations and reported that clarification was being sought about one transaction which appears in the cashbook twice but has only been debited from the bank account on one occasion.</p> <p>13.3 Budget – to receive final position (2023 2024) and update (2024 2025). Copies of the budget had been received and NOTED.</p> <p>13.4 To receive the internal auditor's year-end report The report was circulated and noted by the Council, no further actions were raised following the previous interim audit.</p> <p>13.5 To consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year ending 31.03.2023. With the exception of box 2 which was answered No and box 9 which was answered N/A, the council answered yes to the Annual Governance Statements. The Council APPROVED the annual governance statement and this was signed as required by the Chair and Clerk.</p> <p>13.6 To approve the Accounting Statements for the financial year ending 31.03.2024 The Council APPROVED the accounting statements which had been previously signed by the Clerk and was signed by the Chair.</p> <p>13.7 To confirm the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights – 03.06.24 to 12.07.24. The dates for the period of the exercise of public rights were APPROVED.</p> <p>13.8 To consider applying for a bank account with an alternative bank to maximise protection under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). The Clerk provided options for consideration but concerns were raised about placing reserves into fixed term savings accounts. Cllr Linstead offered to research institutions which may offer accounts with shorter notice periods.</p> <p>13.9 To consider insurance quotations Three quotations had been circulation and it was RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Clear Councils for a 3-year Long Term Agreement at £1,546.58 per annum</p>
14.	<p>General Power of Competence</p> <p>14.1 To consider the adoption of the General Power of Competence The Council RESOLVED to adopt the General Power of Competence as they qualify due to the Clerk holding the CiLCA qualification and the number of Councillors elected at the May 2023 election exceeds two thirds of the total number of Councillors.</p>

15.	<p>Ditchling Gardens/Scout Hut 15.1 Cllr Rowling reported that Action in rural Sussex will be hosting a meeting for those members of the public who expressed an interest in forming a Community Land Trust. Cllr Orme would be attending this meeting as an observer and will provide feedback to the council. Cllr Godley raised the possibility of the property being made into Alms houses and Cllr Rowling agreed to explore this with him.</p>
16.	<p>Parish Office 16.1 To consider appointment of Locum to cover the Clerk’s annual leave. It was RESOLVED that a locum would be appointed to cover the Clerk’s annual leave.</p>
17.	<p>Events. 17.1 80th Anniversary D Day – June 6th 2024. Cllr Barna had agreed to represent the Parish Council at this event.</p>
18.	<p>Future meeting dates Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday, 25th June 2024</p>
	<p>Actions taken forward.</p> <p>From Previous meetings: Min 12.2 (March 2024) Draft Burial Ground Policy – Comments invited. (ALL) Min 7.2 (April 2024) Interpretation Board. Cllr Rowling to distribute design (ER)</p> <p>From this Meeting. Min 8.1 Streetlights. Cllr Sansom and the Clerk to present proposals and formal quotation. Min 12.2 Clerk to draft a social media and press policy. Min 13.8 Cllr Linstead to explore savings account options.</p>

The meeting closed at 9.10pm