



DITCHLING PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Ditchling Parish Council Meeting held at Ditchling Village Hall, Ditchling on Tuesday 30th July 2024 at 7pm

Present: Cllrs Barna, Farrands, Ingham, Linstead, Madden (Chair), Orme, Rowling, Sansom, Seddon and Stapleton

Tracey Euesden (Clerk)

Public Participation:

3 members of the public were present.

35.	Apologies for absence. Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Godley
36.	Declarations of interest. Cllr Ingham declared an interest in agenda item 8.
37.	To approve the minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 25th June 2024. The Minutes were APPROVED and signed by the Chair.
38.	<p>Actions from previous minutes.</p> <p>Min 12.2 (March 2024) Draft Burial Ground Policy – Comments invited. Ongoing. Min 12.2 (May 2024) Social Media and Press Policy – Ongoing. Min 13.8 Cllr Linstead to explore savings account options –Completed See agenda item 9.4</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>Min 24.5 Ditchling Rugby Club. Clarification of meeting date - Completed Min 25.1 Car Park. Site visit to be arranged (Clerk)- Ongoing Min 26.1 Ditchling Gardens. Paper to be prepared and forwarded to CLT – See agenda item 8.1 Min 30.1 Emergency Plan. To draft a plan (MM, Clerk) – See agenda item 15. Min 32.1 Bins. Clarification of suggested location (Clerk) – Ongoing.</p>
39.	Clerks Report: The Clerk’s Report had been circulated with the Agenda Papers.
40.	<p>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</p> <p>No Applications had been received since the last meeting.</p> <p>40.1 SDNP/21/00894/FUL. Cllr Stapleton referred to the recent Appeal that had been lodged against the Planning Authority’s decision to refuse Discharge of Conditions 3 (Further Schemes) in relation to this application. He suggested that the Parish Council should submit a letter of support for the Planning Officer’s decision and this was AGREED.</p>

	<p>40.2 SDNP/23/05134/FUL. Cllr Stapleton reported that he had attended the SDNP Planning Committee meeting on behalf of the Council on 11th July and spoke on behalf of the Council in support of the Council's previously submitted objections to the Application. He asked that it be noted that members of the Planning Committee and the Chair expressed their appreciation that the Parish Council was able to send a representative. He reported that, although the Decision Notice had yet to be published, the Planning Committee had voted unanimously to Refuse the application on the numerous grounds recommended by the Planning Officer. The Clerk was asked to enquire when the Decision Notice would be published.</p>
<p>41.</p>	<p>Car Park Project update.</p> <p>41.1 Update on repairs to Solar Lamp & Site Inspection. The Clerk had contacted Gould Baxter for an update on the repairs to the lamp and to arrange a site inspection. Cllrs would be advised once a response has been received.</p> <p>41.2 Interpretation Board. Cllr Rowling reported that the board should be received within the next week or two.</p>
<p>42.</p>	<p>Ditchling Gardens Update</p> <p>42.2 To receive report and to consider recommendations from Working Party. Following a meeting of the Working Party on 16th July, Cllr Orme had prepared and distributed a paper (see item 8.1 agenda pack) containing the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Whether to commission a viability study from AiRS (subject to receipt of acceptable quotation).</i> • <i>Viability study brief:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(i) whether to approve the proposed brief</i> <i>(ii) as regards tenure, whether to include Option 1 (all units for rent) or Option 2 (strong preference for housing for rent, but shared ownership may be included providing it does not exceed 25% of units).</i> • <i>Other issues: To note the 'other issues' listed in the report</i> • <i>To request the Clerk to write to the CLT Group regarding the brief for the viability study and regarding the 'other issues' and suggesting that representatives of the CLT Group meet with the Working Party before the next council meeting in September.</i> <p>(The quotation for the viability study had now been receive in the sum of £3,000 Plus VAT.)</p> <p>Some Councillors had expressed reservations that the Parish Council had not fully considered the implications of donating its only asset to a CLT rather than realising funds by sale of the site to use for the benefit of the whole community and it was suggested that all of the options should be debated and decided upon before committing funds to assess the viability of producing social housing.</p> <p>Cllr Stapleton Proposed, Seconded Cllr Linstead, that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council should be arranged with the sole purpose of debating the various possibilities with a view to agreeing the best course of action and it was RESOLVED:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>That an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council will be arranged for early September and that the Working Party will meet in the meantime to prepare the necessary information required about the various options in order for decisions to be made regarding the future of the property.</i></p> <p>42.3 Insurance Renewal. The following quotations had been received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Clear Group - £2,338.73 Including IPT and Policy Administration Fee.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Gallagher - £2,510.80 Including IPT and Policy Administration Fee.</i> <p>Councillors queried these apparently high premiums and the Clerk was asked to review the terms of the policy to ensure that the cover levels are appropriate and seek alternative quotations. However, it was noted that the current policy expires prior to the next meeting and it was therefore RESOLVED:</p> <p><i>That in the absence of any possible amendments to the cover levels and lower quotations, to Accept the policy from The Clear Group at £2,338.73.</i></p>
43.	<p>Finance</p> <p>43.1 To approve schedule of payments for July 2024. The schedule of Payments was APPROVED</p> <p>43.2 To approve bank reconciliations for June 2024. Cllr Orme reported that he had reviewed and signed the bank reconciliations and the documents were NOTED. Members were advised that the apparent anomaly in the accounting software mentioned at the last meeting had been clarified.</p> <p>43.3 Budget Review. Members had been provided with the budget including details of income and expenditure to the end of June and the document was duly NOTED. Cllr Stapleton suggested that any committed expenditure should be noted in the budget and the Clerk will include this in future reports.</p> <p>43.4 To Consider opening a Savings Account with Redwood Bank. As detailed in the Clerk's report, the Council is advised to open an additional account with an alternative bank to maximise its protection under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). It was RESOLVED: To open a 35 day notice Savings Account currently offering 4.1% AER.</p>
44.	<p>Recreation Ground & Burial Ground</p> <p>44.1 Update on works to repair sewage leak. Councillors had been provided with a copy of Southern Water's letter of response to the Council's complaint. Whilst Southern Water states it does not believe that the wet pieces of land on the field north of the sink hole are a result of further issues with the sewer network, it has not provided the assurance or evidence requested, that the whole of the pipework has been inspected. The Clerk was asked to follow this up.</p> <p>The Contractors have advised that the reinstatement works are complete and Cllr Linstead agreed to inspect the area to ensure that these have been carried out satisfactorily.</p> <p>44.2 Playground Update. Cllr Farrands reported that the tender process had now ended and 8 submissions had been received. These are in the process of being scored against the tender criteria and it was hoped that a shortlist of 3 or 4 designs could be drawn up with a view to a public consultation taking place in the Autumn with feedback being used to make the final decision.</p> <p>44.3 To Consider recommendation from Simon Woodley to obtain quotations to increase the depths of the kerbs on the drive up to the Burial Ground. Mr Woodley carried out various maintenance work for the council and had reported that in periods of heavy rain, the water collects with the mud from the verges and flows down the drive. He suggests that by raising the kerbs, the rain water would simply run down the drive. It was suggested that Cllr Farrands and Mr Woodley inspect the area together to consider what needs to be done.</p>
45.	<p>Traffic and Transport Matters</p> <p>45.1 To Receive Report from Working Party and to consider recommendations therein. Following a meeting of the Working Party to discuss the response from ESCC Highways about the four schemes for prioritising. The Working Party had put forward the following recommendations for consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To Request expenditure in the sum of £500 for a Community Match Appraisal to be carried out on the proposed extension of the 20 mph speed limit zone.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To include the sum of £10,000 for the purchase and installation of a mobile Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) in the council's budget for 2025 2026. <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <p><i>To request that ESCC carry out a Community Match Appraisal on the proposed extension of the 20 mph speed zone at a cost of £500.00.</i></p> <p>Cllr Orme reported that the process to form the 2025 2026 budget would commence in the Autumn and it was suggested that the various Working Groups should submit their proposals for consideration. The inclusion of the sum of £10,000 for the mobile VAS would be reviewed as part of that budgeting process.</p>
46.	<p>Streetlights</p> <p>46.1 Update on replacement Lanterns – Cllr Sansom reported that the four lanterns already purchased by the council had now been installed. Unfortunately, one of these appears to be faulty and the Clerk has reported this. Following the last meeting the quotation to install a further four lanterns had been accepted and it was hoped that these would be installed during the Autumn. Cllr Sansom is hoping to schedule a meeting with the lantern manufacturers to discuss lead times and the potential for future batch orders.</p> <p>46.2 A quote to refurbish the four columns that had recently been fitted with new lanterns had been received and Cllr Sansom will write a proposal for consideration at the next meeting. Referring to the recent inspections that she and Cllr Sansom had carried out on each of the lanterns, Cllr Ingham reported that many were being obscured by overgrowth and it was suggested that some form of publicity should be created to encourage people to check the hedges on their properties. It was also suggested that a polite letter be written that can be delivered to landowners highlighting the problem and requesting that the overgrowth be cut back. These courses of action were AGREED.</p>
47.	<p>Councillor Training Opportunities</p> <p>47.1 Members had been provided with information about training sessions available for new councillors as well as a refresher for existing councillors. Cllr Seddon had requested to attend the October session and the Clerk would recirculate the dates available.</p>
48.	<p>Appointments to Working Parties.</p> <p>48.1 Discussions took place about whether any additional members should be appointed to the working parties and it was DECIDED:</p> <p><i>That no additional appointments were necessary at this time but Cllr Linstead would be invited to attend the Traffic Working Party meetings as a liaison with the school.</i></p>
49.	<p>Resilience Planning. Cllr Madden & the Clerk will be providing an update at a future meeting.</p>
50.	<p>Correspondence and Consultations.</p> <p>33.1 CPRE Sussex – Survey on Sewage Spills. The survey was NOTED.</p>
51.	<p>Land at Keymer Road adjacent to car park. Cllrs Madden and Rowling have agreed to represent the Parish Council in discussions about this land. Cllr Godley would be asked if he would like to take part.</p>
52.	<p>Future meeting date and to Approve Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>52.1 The Scheme of Delegation was APPROVED.</p> <p>52.2 Next Parish Council Meeting – It was noted that the Agenda incorrectly stated that the next meeting was scheduled for 27th August. The date of the next meeting is 24th September 2024</p>
	<p>Actions taken forward.</p> <p>From Previous meetings: Min 12.2 (May 2024) Social Media and Press Policy – Ongoing.</p>

Min 25.1 Car Park. Site visit to be arranged (Clerk)
Min 30.1 Emergency / Resilience Plan. To draft a plan (MM, Clerk)

From this Meeting.

Min 42.2 Extraordinary Meeting to be arranged (Clerk)
Min 42.3 Review of insurance cover levels and to seek alternative quote (Clerk)
Min 43.4 To open a 35 day notice Savings Account with Redwood (Clerk)
Min 44.3 To Inspect drive way to Burial Ground (PF)
Min 45.1 To arrange Community Match Appraisal (Clerk)
Min 46.1 To arrange meeting with lantern manufacturers (Robert S)
Min 46.2 To draft letter to landowners re obscured lanterns (Clerk)

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

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