



DITCHLING PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Ditchling Parish Council Meeting held at Ditchling Village Hall, Ditchling on Tuesday 23rd September 2025

Present: Cllrs Madden (Chair), Barna, Orme, Seddon and Stapleton.

Tracey Euesden (Clerk)

Also Present:

District Councillor Paul Mellor

Public Participation:

3 Members of the public were present.

50.	Apologies of absence – Apologies were received from Cllrs Farrands, Godley, Ingham, Rowling and Sansom.
51.	Declarations of Interest. There were no declarations of interest.
52.	To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 29th July 2025. The minutes of the meeting were APPROVED and duly signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the meeting.
53.	<p>Actions from previous minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Min 101.1 To commence drafting a Communications Strategy (All) See agenda item Min 39.3 To appoint Internal Auditor (Clerk) Completed Min 40.2 To award hedge cutting contract on receipt of quotations (PF, ER Clerk) Completed Min 41.3 To accept ESCC's offer and to request supply of posters. (Clerk). referring to a question raised during public participation, the Clerk confirmed that the posters had been requested but there had been some confusion about the delivery address which would hopefully be resolved shortly. Min 41.4 To accept quotations for SiDs and Installation. (Clerk) SIDS Purchased – awaiting Licenses from ESCC Min 41.5 To produce budget projection paper (R Sansom and Clerk). Completed. <p>Referring to Minute 41.5, Cllr Stapleton enquired as to how the Council intends to move forward with consultation of residents on the request for step increases to the precept in order to fund traffic projects.</p> <p>The Chairman confirmed that an additional meeting had been convened for the purpose of allowing Members to express their views and to provide an opportunity for clarification of proposals brought forward by the Traffic Committee. As this meeting was informal, no decisions were taken.</p> <p>Cllr Madden further explained that the purpose of the event was to enable all Members to contribute their view and opinions on each of the identified priority projects, and to consider</p>

	<p>whether these should be funded through an increase in precept. It remains the intention of the Chair that these matters will be subject to further discussion at the October Council meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Stapleton requested that a clear statement should be included in the minutes as to what information the Traffic Group should provide to both the Finance Committee and the Council for them to consider the subjects.</p> <p>It was therefore suggested that the Traffic Committee (or working group) should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the list of priority projects in the context of estimated costs, timescales and available and potential funding sources. • Prepare recommendations for submission to full council for formal consideration. <p>Cllr Orme also commented that this would assist the Finance Committee when considering the budget for 2026 / 2027.</p>
54.	Clerk's report. The Clerk's report had been circulated with the agenda papers.
55.	<p>Planning The following Applications were discussed.</p> <p>55.1 SDNP/25/03522/LIS: 1-3 South Street. Structural repairs and refurbishment of first floor loft into a study room/</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT</p> <p>55.2 SDNP/25/03037/HOUS: Paygate Cottage. Two storey rear extension.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to submit a COMMENT querying the size of the extension and whether it is within the permitted Gross Internal Area of 30% increase.</p> <p>55.3 SDNP/25/03696/TCA: The Bull, 2 High Street. T1 Whitebeam – Deadfell in interest of safety and replant with Katsura tree.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT</p> <p>55.4 SDNP/25/03574/HOUS: Bydown, Shirleys. Erection of a single storey side and two storey rear extensions. Loft: conversion and remodelling and extending of garage.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to submit a COMMENT noting that these proposals will result in a 3-bed property being converted to a 4-bed, which conflicts with the primary purpose of policy SD31 to reduce the loss of small and medium homes in the National Park. The Planning Officer is requested to check that the extension size is within the permitted Gross Internal Area of 30% increase.</p> <p>55.5 SDNP/25/03563/FUL: Ivy Farm. Creation of wildlife pond with a maximum depth of 2000mm</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT</p> <p>55.6 SDNP/25/03753/TCA: 43 High Street. T1, T2 and G1 Ash – fell due to ash die back.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT</p>

56.	<p>Finance</p> <p>56.1 To approve schedule of payments for September 2025 and to ratify schedule of Payments for August 2025. The schedule of payments for September were APPROVED. The schedule of payments for August were RATIFIED.</p> <p>56.2 To Receive Bank Reconciliations for July and August 2025. Cllr. Orme had reviewed the reconciliations which were NOTED.</p> <p>56.3 Notice of Conclusion of Audit – To receive and consider External Auditor’s Report ES0027 for the year ended 31st March 2025. The report was NOTED and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been published on the Parish Council website and notice board.</p> <p>56.4 Budget Setting Process for 2026 2027. A meeting of the Finance Committee would be scheduled for October / November and Committees and Working Groups were asked to consider their budget requirements in the interim.</p> <p>56.5 To review and approve list of payments to be made by Direct Debit. The list was APPROVED.</p> <p>56.6 Review of subscriptions to other bodies. The list was reviewed and APPROVED.</p> <p>56.7 Review of fees and charges made. The fees and charges were reviewed and the Clerk was delegated to negotiate a possible increase in fees with the food truck and Stoolball Club.</p> <p>56.8 To Receive notification of NJC Pay Agreement for 2025. Members were advised that agreement on rates of pay has been reached and the Clerk’s award would be backdated to April.</p>
57.	<p>Recreation Ground & Burial Ground</p> <p>57.1 Update on Playground Project. Following the SDNPA’s decision not to award CIL a meeting with the contractor to finalise colour schemes and place the order has been arranged.</p> <p>57.2 To consider proposals for the installation of a Tennis Fence as part of the playground refurbishment project and funded by the Tennis Club. Cllrs Rowling and Farrands had drawn up this proposal following an offer of funding from Ditchling Tennis Club for the provision of a tennis fence to coincide with the installation of the replacement ball wall as part of the playground project. The proposal document outlines the benefits of this additional facility and addresses the potential noise implications as posed by nearby residents and whilst councillors noted that two further representations against the proposals had been received since the publication of the agenda, councillors could find no evidence that the additional facility would have a negative impact upon the area.</p> <p>The proposal document also references the Council’s procurement regulations which requires 3 fixed price quotations to be sourced for contracts greater than £5,000, and requests that the Council resolves to waive this requirement using Financial Regulation 5.12 (iv)* as the particular apparatus being proposed is only available from one supplier.</p> <p>The proposal document contains the following recommendations.</p> <p>i) That the Council resolves to waive the requirement for competitive</p>

	<p><i>quotations for the procurement of the Corrie ServeAce Tennis Practice Fence, on the grounds that it is the only product on the market that meets the specific technical and functional requirements of Ditchling Tennis Club.</i></p> <p>It was unanimously RESOLVED to accept the Proposal Document and invoke Financial Regulation 5.12 (iv).</p> <p>ii) <i>That the Council records its thanks to the tennis club for this generous donation.</i></p> <p>It was unanimously RESOLVED to record the Council's thanks to the tennis club for this generous donation.</p> <p>*FR5.12 The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below.....</p> <p>(iv) Goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.</p>
58.	<p>Traffic Committee</p> <p>58.1 Update on Priority Projects.</p> <p>As reported earlier, Cllr Stapleton confirmed that 2 Mobile Speed Indicator Devices had been purchased and Wilbar Associates had submitted the necessary licence applications to ESCC.</p> <p>A meeting of the Traffic Working Group would be arranged as suggested in minute 53 (41.5).</p> <p>Cllr Stapleton reported that he and Cllr Barna had attended a public meeting held to discuss the safety of horse riders when using the roads in the village. He noted the offer of the organiser to assist the council with displaying the signs mentioned in item 53 (41.3) and suggested that the community group should consider applying to ESCC for traffic calming measures on the Beacon Road.</p>
59.	<p>Streetlights</p> <p>59.1 Update on Lantern Replacement Schedule. The Clerk has received quotations to replace 2 of the remaining 4 lanterns that are not working:</p> <p>P1 – East Gardens – To replace lantern - £1,253.11</p> <p>P1 – South View – To Install Pillar, Transfer DNO Supply and replace lantern. £2,410.70</p> <p>The Clerk had requested the results of the latest night inspection report which may highlight further defects and would consult with Cllrs. Ingham and Sansom to formulate proposals for consideration by the council.</p>
60.	<p>Action in rural Sussex – Housing Needs Survey.</p> <p>60.1 To receive final report from AirS. The final report was NOTED.</p>
61	<p>Community Land Trust</p> <p>61.1 Update from Cllr Orme. Cllr Orme reported that he has attended recent meetings of the CLT Steering Group. As the results of the Housing Needs Survey have demonstrated that there is a need for affordable housing, the group's focus is to become a legal entity to enable it to identify funding opportunities and appropriate sites for development. The group is in the process of exploring the best way to achieve this and Cllr Orme will continue to report on progress.</p>
62.	<p>To Consider Documents for Approval</p> <p>62.1 DPC Communications Strategy. Cllr Barna has drafted this document and had received comments from Cllr Rowling prior to the meeting. Further suggestions were</p>

	<p>made and the document will be amended to reflect these before being submitted for consideration at a future meeting.</p> <p>62.2 DPC Policy for dealing with the Press and Social Media. This Document was APPROVED.</p> <p>62.3 DPC IT Policy. This matter was deferred pending Cllr Barna's comments and suggested changes being made.</p> <p>62.4 DPC Recreation and Burial Ground Working Group Terms of Reference. Cllr Orme suggested that it be noted that the group was also responsible for the playground and with this amendment, the Document was APPROVED.</p>
63.	<p>To Consider Documents for Annual Review</p> <p>63.1 DPC Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. The document was REVIEWED with no required changes.</p>
64.	<p>Consultations</p> <p>64.1 Brighton Marina Neighbourhood Forum. It was noted that this consultation was for residents local to Brighton Marina.</p> <p>64.2 Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy. It was RESOLVED that the Recreation and Burial Ground Working Group should respond to this consultation</p>
65.	<p>Events</p> <p>65.1 Remembrance Day Parade. Sunday 9th November 10.30 am.</p>
66.	<p>Future meeting dates</p> <p>66.1 Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday, 28th October 2025.</p> <p>66.2 Future Meeting Dates. Meeting dates for 2026 have been shared.</p>
67	<p><i>CONFIDENTIAL SESSION - Under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public will be excluded from the following items on the grounds that the confidential matters to be discussed under item 140.1 below would be prejudicial in the public interest.</i></p> <p>67.1 Burial Ground – an update on Inspections and plot allocations was provided.</p> <p>67.2 Ditchling Gardens – an update on the sales process was provided/</p> <p>Members were updated.</p>
	<p>Actions taken forward.</p> <p>From previous meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Min 41.3 To chase ESCC for supply of posters. (Clerk). <p>From this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Min 56.7 To review fees with food truck and Stoolball Club (Clerk) • Min 58.1 Traffic Working Group Meeting to be arranged (Cllr. Stapleton)

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.