



DITCHLING PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Ditchling Parish Council Meeting held at Ditchling Village Hall, Ditchling on Tuesday 27th January 2026

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

Tracey Euesden (Clerk)

Public Participation:

2 Members of the public were present.

107.	Public Participation. One Member of the public introduced herself as the applicant of one of the planning applications to be considered.
108.	Apologies of absence – Apologies were received from Cllr Stapleton District Councillor Mellor had also extended his apologies.
109.	Declarations of Interest. Cllr Seddon declared an interest in agenda item 14.4 and Cllr Ingham declared an interest in agenda item 18.1
110.	To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 2nd December 2025 Minute 96.1 Cllr Sansom reminded Members that an action had been agreed to contact owners of properties with lanterns attached to advise them of the procedures to follow should they encounter any issues with the lights and this would be added to the action list for this meeting. The minutes of the meeting were APPROVED and duly signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the meeting.
111.	Actions from previous minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">Min. 94.2 LDC Asset Transfer. To be added to agenda for Jan / Feb 2026. (Clerk) CompletedMin. 95.8 Meeting to be arranged re. Planning Enforcement. (Clerk) Ongoing.Min. 95.8 List of cases to be collated for meeting. (Planning Working Group) OngoingMin. 99.1 SiDS visit to property to be arranged. (Clerk) No response from resident.Min. 99.2 Explore funding for SiDS from Sussex PCC. (Clerk) Funding Window Closed 4th Dec. Awaiting new funding window.Min 103.1 Local Government Reorganisation – comments by 3rd Jan 26. (All) Completed
112	Clerk's report. The Clerk's report had been circulated with the agenda papers.

113.	<p>113.1 Local Governance Review. (LGR) District Councillor Mellor had extended his apologies for this meeting.</p> <p>113.2 Lewes District Council Asset Devolution.- To Consider applying to LDC for transfer of asset – Village Hall Car Park. Since the last meeting, the Clerk reported that the potential transfer of asset did seem to align with LDC's Asset Transfer Strategy. Clarification is still required regarding the terms of the potential transfer, timescale, maintenance costs and any income received but it was generally felt that the council is obliged to give the matter further consideration. It was RESOLVED</p> <p><i>To complete the Expression of Interest Form and to draw up a list of questions be submitted to LDC.</i></p>
114.	<p>Planning The following Applications were discussed.</p> <p>114.1 SDNP/25/04959/FUL. Senge House. Sub-division of plot and erection of no. 1 dwelling with detached garage and erection of detached garage for existing dwelling. A debate took place regarding the application. Members acknowledged the high-quality design and ecological considerations of the proposed new dwelling. However, concern was raised that although the application is presented as a three-bedroom property, the inclusion of additional rooms labelled as offices or snugs could allow easy conversion to further bedrooms. This was noted as potentially conflicting with the Policies 27 and 31 of the South Downs National Park Local Plan regarding appropriate use of land and size of homes, and the Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston Neighbourhood Plan Policy HS1 which supports the delivery of smaller homes of three bedrooms or fewer. Cllr Godley observed that increased home-working trends naturally lead to more office space being incorporated into new dwellings. Cllr Orme recognised the opportunity for the site to contribute to the supply of smaller homes but said each application should be considered on its merits Cllr Rowling highlighted that the parish council has previously objected to similar proposals and expressed concern that failing to do so in this instance could weaken the practical effect of the relevant policies the council has committed to uphold. To maintain consistency with those policies, she Proposed, Seconded Cllr Barna. that an objection be submitted. 3 in favour, 6 Against – Motion not carried. Cllr Orme Proposed, Seconded Cllr Seddon to submit a comment of No Comment. 7 In Favour, 2 Against. It was therefore RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT</p> <p>114.2 SDNP/25/05013/HOUS. 69A Lewes Road. Erection of veranda structure and decked area to front. t was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT</p> <p>114.3 SDNP/26/00121/TCA. 5 Emmet Gardens. T20- Turkey Oak – Crown reduction by 20% along with removal of any dead or diseased limbs. It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT</p>
115.	<p>Streetlights</p> <p>115.1 Damaged Column on Farm Lane. Confirmation of the cost to replace the column and lantern have yet to be received but is believed to be in the region of £3,200. Permission is to be requested from UKPN to attach a new lantern onto the wooden post that is currently in situ as a more cost-effective solution.</p>

	<p>115.2 Results of night inspection and update on streetlight replacement programme. The most recent night inspection report indicates that there are two columns out and Cllr Ingham offered to double check to see if repairs have been carried out or whether quotations for replacement lanterns needs to be sought.</p> <p>115.3 Balfour Beatty Invoice – Update following discussion with residents. Cllr Sansom reported that he and the Clerk have met with the residents to discuss the situation and it appears that an agreement may shortly be reached.</p>
116.	<p>Finance</p> <p>116.1 To approve schedule of payments for January 2026 and to ratify payments for December 2025. The schedule of payments for January, including 2 invoices received since the production of the agenda, was APPROVED. The schedule of payments for December was RATIFIED.</p> <p>116.2 To Receive Bank Reconciliations for November and December 2025. Cllr. Orme had reviewed the reconciliations which were NOTED.</p>
117.	<p>Recreation Ground & Burial Ground</p> <p>117.1 Update on Playground Equipment Installation. It was reported that the scheduled start date for the project has been delayed due to the poor weather conditions and a site inspection is due to take place in the coming week to reassess the timescale.</p> <p>117.2 To Consider actions in response to reports of the construction of unauthorised access points onto recreation ground and burial ground. Following a number of reports that access points have been created onto council land, a National Association of Local Councils (NALC) advice note has been circulated. The note details what options are available to councils to prevent the residents from gaining a legal right of access after a period of time. The matter was discussed and it was RESOLVED. <i>That the Clerk writes to the residents to offer them a licence giving permission to access the council's land by foot only at an annual wayleave / fee of £100 to be reviewed after a period of 5 years,</i></p>
118.	<p>Pavilion Lease</p> <p>118.1 To Consider response to the Cricket Club's proposals for the pavilion and lease. Members have been provided with a paper summarising the Cricket Club's intentions to form a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) and for this new legal entity to become the new tenant of the pavilion under a new lease. The proposals would allow the CASC to pursue its aspirations for the future of the pavilion and to seek funding for maintenance and improvements of the building and whilst the Cricket Club would have ultimate responsibility for the building, the existing users would all be offered terms similar to those currently in place. The longer term vision is for a refurbished building suitable for a much wider community use.</p> <p>Councillors expressed support for the outline proposals and were encouraged by the Club's aims to form a legal entity with which a lease could be agreed. Further discussion and negotiations would need to take place regarding the terms and it was suggested that the Council should draw up some conditions under which the lease could be agreed. The Clerk was asked to arrange a further meeting with the Cricket Club to progress the matter.</p>
119.	<p>To Consider Documents for Approval.</p> <p>119.1 DPC Community Resilience Plan.</p>

	<p>Members considered the Draft Community Resilience Plan and a discussion took place regarding its purpose and intended scope. Councillors expressed uncertainty as to whether the document was designed primarily as a communication framework for informing parishioners during a major incident, or whether it was intended to set out how the parish council would lead, coordinate, and deploy community resources in response to such an event.</p> <p>Given the lack of clarity between these two potential functions, the council agreed that further refinement and development of the document is required before it can be adopted.</p>
120.	<p>To Consider applications for grants.</p> <p>120.1 Action Against Abuse – Domestic Abuse Support Agency. Request for £479.10 to support 16 victims in obtaining protective court orders. A discussion took place about the lack of information about how the Agency advertises its services within the parish and whether any local residents have received support and the Clerk was asked to raise this with the group. There was no Proposer for the sum of £479.10. Cllr Orme Proposed, Seconded Cllr Ingham, the sum of £250 and RESOLVED To award the sum of £250.00</p> <p>120.2 Ditchling Morris Group. Request for £50 to fund purchase of binding tape for crossover tapes in group's colours. Cllr Ingham Proposed, Seconded Cllr Orme and RESOLVED To award the sum of £50.00</p> <p>120.3 The Monday Group. Request for £500 to fund rights of way improvements and repairs. Cllr Rowling Proposed, Seconded Cllr Madden and RESOLVED To award the sum of £500.00</p> <p>120.4 Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston PCC – Request for £250 towards maintenance of the Village Clock. Cllr Rowling Proposed, Seconded Cllr Barna and RESOLVED To award the sum of £250.00</p> <p>120.5 Stoolball Ditchling. Request for £234.99 to purchase event gazebo and Sum Up Air Card Reader. Cllr Ingham Proposed, Seconded Cllr Rowling and RESOLVED To award the sum of £234.99</p>
121	<p>Consultations</p> <p>121.1 Lewes and Eastbourne Planning Policy – Lewes Local Plan. A Spatial Strategy for Development and Site Applications. 18th December 2025 to 28th February 2026. The consultation was NOTED.</p>
122.	<p>Events</p> <p>122.1 Maverick Race – Trail running event 12th April 2026</p> <p>122.2 Annual Meeting of the Parish 6th May 2026. To Discuss preparation and content for meeting. The following suggestions for content have been received so far and councillors are encouraged to submit other ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on Parish Council's activities over the last year. • Plans for Traffic Projects and Impact upon precept. • Devolution and its impact upon parish councils. • Business Planning and budgeting for maintenance of assets. • Local Elections 2027 – How to attract interest in the role of parish councillor. <p>It was suggested that the matter of the LDC Asset Transfer (minute 113.2) could be included and that the Cricket Club should be invited to make a short presentation about</p>

	its vision for the pavilion. A further discussion will take place at the next meeting.
123.	Next meeting date 123.1 Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 24th February 2026
124.	CONFIDENTIAL SESSION - <i>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> 87.2 Ditchling Gardens – Cllr Rowling had distributed notes from the recent Working Group Meeting and it was RESOLVED that the property would be withdrawn from the market pending further assessment of the situation.
	Actions taken forward. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Min. 110 - Contact owners of properties with streetlight attached to advise of process if a problem occurs. Cllr Ingham to provide addresses (VI and Clerk) • Min 113.2 - Asset Transfer – Complete expression of interest form (Clerk) • Min 118 – Pavilion Lease – draw up list of conditions for lease (All)

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.