



DITCHLING PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Ditchling Parish Council Meeting held at Ditchling Village Hall, on Tuesday 28th July 2026

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

Tracey Euesden (Clerk)

Also Present: District Councillor Paul Mellor

Public Participation:

There were 2 members of the public present

35.	Public Participation. District Councillor Mellor reported that changes to the National Planning Policy Framework would be introduced from September and suggested that the Parish Council might consider requesting a presentation on the changes by ESALC.
36.	To receive written application for the office of Parish Councillor and to consider co-option to fill the existing vacancy. Malcolm Roberts gave a brief description of his background and reasons for applying to join the council. In the absence of any objections, he was welcomed onto the council. Cllr Roberts signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.
37.	Apologies of absence – Apologies were received from Cllrs Barna, Godley and Sansom.
38.	Declarations of Interest. Cllr Orme declared an interest in items 13.1 & 13.2.
39.	To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on the 30th June 2026. The minutes of the meeting were APPROVED and duly signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the meeting.
40.	Actions from previous minutes From previous meetings: • MIn 11.8 Clerk's Salary – Standing Order to be set up. <i>Ongoing.</i> • Mins 12.1 & 12.2 - Use of Recreation Ground –Recreation and Burial Grounds Working Party to action. <i>Completed.</i> • Min 171.2 - Access onto Recreation Ground from private properties. (Cllr Stapleton and the Clerk to review individual cases). <i>Ongoing</i> • Min 25.2 Bank Reconciliations for May to be presented at July meeting. <i>Completed</i> • Min 26.1 & 26.2 Recreation and Burial Grounds Working Group to arrange meeting. <i>Ongoing</i>

	- Min 26.4 Burial Ground research to be reviewed <i>Ongoing</i>. - Min 27.1 Village Maintenance - Agenda for SLR Meeting to be drawn up. <i>Ongoing</i> - Min 28.1 Footpaths – Monday Group to be contacted. <i>Completed</i> - Min 29.5 HGVs reporting process. MP's Office to be contacted. <i>Completed</i> - Min 30.1 External Auditor Feedback to ESALC. <i>Ongoing</i> - Min 31.1 Itinerary to be put in place (Clerk) and Working Groups to meet. <i>Ongoing</i>
41.	Clerk's report. The Clerk's report had been circulated with the agenda papers.
42.	Local Government Reorganisation. 42.1 It was noted that the Clerk's report incorrectly states that Falmer will transfer to an expanded Brighton & Hove City Councils. District Cllr Mellor reported that Five District Councils (Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Rother and Wealden) are due to be transferred to a single unitary council by April 2028 with plans for elections for a shadow cabinet to be held in May 2027. Responding to questions, District Cllr Mellor confirmed that there will be no changes to boundaries and divisions and that the "One East Sussex" proposal includes plans for voluntary redundancies to be offered to Officers during the shadow year. He noted that Ditchling Parish Council is among the very few who are still considering the transfer of asset (Village Hall Car Park).
43.	Planning The following Applications were discussed. 43.1 SDNP/26/02669/HOUS and SDNP/26/02670/LIS. 56 North End. Conversion of existing double garage into a painting studio, external landscaping for additional parking area and solar PV installation. It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT. 43.2 SDNP/26/02780/HOUS. 14 North End. Replacement garage. It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT. 43.3 LW/26/0202. Berrymead, Spatham Lane. Creation of access track (retrospective) It was RESOLVED to submit a comment of NO COMMENT. 43.4 SDNP/26/02840/CND The Macs Farm. Variation of Condition 2 (use of building), Condition 3 (Access) and Condition 5 (Noise Management) of Planning Approval SDNP/24/01046/CND. As Cllrs have only just been advised of this application, it was suggested that comments be sent to the Clerk and Cllr Rowling by 15th August in order for them to be collated under delegated powers and submitted to the Planning Authority by 21st August. This was AGREED.
44.	Finance 44.1 To approve schedule of payments for July 2026. The schedule of payments for June, including three additional invoices received since the publication of the agenda, was APPROVED. 44.2 To Receive Bank Reconciliations for May & June 2026. The bank reconciliations have been circulated and are due to be reviewed by Cllr Sansom.

	44.3 To consider approval of terms for Internal Audit Services for 2026/2027 and to confirm the independent status of the Internal Auditor. The proposal from Domino Council Services to provide independent Internal Audit Services for 2026/2027 at a cost of £280.00 was APPROVED.
45.	Recreation Ground & Burial Ground 45.1 Pavilion Lease – Update on negotiations. Notes from a recent meeting had been circulated along with the draft Heads of Terms. A discussion took place regarding the best way to support the Cricket Club's aims to improve the building, and it was noted that most funding providers would require a long-term lease to be in place. It was suggested that an Agreement to Lease subject to funding should be progressed and in order to move things forward, the Working Group was asked to arrange another meeting to address the following matters and report back to the Council. • Progress on forming a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC). • Details of the group's constitution. • Current financial position and funding progress. • How the needs of all users of the pavilion are being included in the plans for the building. 45.2 Ditchling Cricket Club – To Formally authorise use of the recreation ground for Cricket Week and to consider request for use of the grassed area for car parking. Ditchling Cricket Club's plans for the Cricket Week commencing 10th August 2026. Including the erection of a marquis and for use of the grassed area next to the car park for overflow parking for the duration of the event were AUTHORISED.
46.	Traffic Working Group. 46.1 Safer Crossing Points. Cllr Stapleton provided a brief update on the proposals for safer crossing points at Beacon Road, Lewes Road and Keymer Road. He reported that East Sussex County Council has provided comments on the initial designs, and that Wilbar Associates is now revising the plans in response to this feedback. Updated cost estimates are expected shortly. Cllr Stapleton further advised that he will prepare a written report outlining how the original crossing proposals set out in the Motion Report have been refined and scaled down to form the current scheme to allow councillors a full understanding of each of the schemes and to make an informed decision whether to progress them. 46.2 Speed Indicator Devices – To review period for rotation of devices and any update on Ditchling Village Association's application for funding from the Sussex PCC's fund. Members were reminded that the devices are currently rotated every eight weeks and it was AGREED: that no changes are required at this time. No update from the Sussex PCC has been received.
47.	Community Land Trust (CLT) 47.1 Update from Cllr Orme. Cllr Orme reported that the Steering Group is in the process of forming a legal entity and is receiving advice and support from Action in rural Sussex (AirS). 47.2 To Consider donation of £950 (correction from agenda) to support the CLT's intentions for form an incorporated group. The CLT Steering Group has requested that the Parish Council provides financial support to cover the costs involved with forming a legal entity. Cllr Stapleton Proposed, Seconded Cllr Rowling and RESOLVED: To donate the sum of £950.00

48.	Footpaths 48.1 To approve draft tender document for surface improvements to Footpath DIT/47/2 (Roman Road). The draft tender document had been circulated and subject to minor amendments, was APPROVED. Under a closed Tender process, contractors will be invited to tender by electronic means from 10th August until 11th September with notification of the award being given on 15th September and work commencing from 30th September.
49.	49.1 London to Brighton Bike Ride. The Council has received complaints regarding Dumbrells Court Road being used as an access route to a rest stop for cyclists, race support supervisors and medical support vehicles. Residents report instances of blocked access, litter and debris being left behind, and a delay to an ambulance responding under blue lights to a medical emergency at the retirement complex. It was AGREED: that Dumbrells Court Road should not be used for future races and the Clerk was asked to write to the race organisers to highlight this.
50.	Events 50.1 MP Summer Visits – Thursday 30th July 2026 – 7.30pm. Ditchling Village Hall 50.2 Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday, 22nd September – 7pm. Ditchling Village Hall There is no Parish Council meeting in August.
51.	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. 51.1 Ditchling Gardens – Cllr Rowling reported that pre-application advice is being sought from the South Downs National Park Planning Authority. 51.2 Staffing Matters – it was RESOLVED: To appoint a part-time Project Officer for a temporary period of 4 months pending the council's strategic review of its Business Plan and priority objectives.
	Actions taken forward. From previous meetings: • MIn 11.8 Clerk's Salary – Standing Order to be set up. (Clerk and authorised signatory) • Mins 12.1 & 12.2 - Use of Recreation Ground – Recreation and Burial Grounds Working Party to action. • Min 171.2 - Access onto Recreation Ground from private properties. (Cllr Stapleton and the Clerk to review individual cases). • Min 26.4 Burial Ground research to be reviewed (Clerk) • Min 27.1 Village Maintenance - Agenda for SLR Meeting to be drawn up (Cllr Stapleton and Clerk) • Min 31.1 All Working Groups to meet (all Groups) From this meeting. • Min 43.4. SDNP/26/02840/CND The Macs Farm. Comments to the Clerk by 15th August (Planning WG) • Min 46.1. Crossing Points. Report to be produced (Cllr Stapleton) • Min 48.1. Footpath Tender process to commence (Clerk) • Min 49.1. Bike Ride – Letter to be sent (Clerk) • Min 51.2. Staffing. Appointment to be made (Clerk)

The meeting closed at 8.35pm