

Ditchingham Parish Council

ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Ditchingham Village Hall

Monday 12th May 2025 – 8.25 pm

Councillors: Keith Weston (Chair), Brendon Bernard (Vice Chair), Andrew Evans-Hendrick, Neil Humphries, Gill Oliver and Tony Swan

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): Sally Chapman

Also Present: Ed King, River Waveney Trust Catchment Resilience Officer and two parishioners

A. Parishioners' Matters of Concern

No questions

B. Natural Flood Management in the River Waveney – Presentation by Ed King

Ed King, Catchment Resilience Officer at the River Waveney Trust, delivered a presentation on local flood management initiatives. His two-year post, funded by the Environment Agency, focuses on increasing flood resilience in the River Waveney Catchment. Key activities include engaging with communities to develop flood plans, promoting Natural Flood Management (NFM) techniques, and exploring the creation of a 'flood hub'.

The Environment Agency has allocated £25 million for flood schemes, with support from Norfolk County Council (the Lead Local Flood Authority), Suffolk County Council, and other partners. Public engagement events, such as a drop-in clinic in the Broome Beck catchment, aim to raise awareness of responsibilities, gather feedback, and share knowledge.

Proposed NFM methods include tree planting at watershed tops, creating ponds and reservoirs, re-meandering rivers, and installing leaky barriers to slow water flow. The success of these initiatives depends on collaboration with landowners and local communities.

The Chair thanked Ed for his informative presentation and for answering members' questions, and requested that the Council be kept informed of future developments.

C. County Councillor, District Councillor and External Reports

No further reports

MINUTES

1. To Appoint a Chair

Keith Weston was Proposed and Elected as Chair.

2. To Appoint a Vice Chair

Brendon Bernard was Proposed and Elected as Vice Chair.

3. To Approve Apologies for Absence

Apologies were Received and Accepted from Councillor Gifford.

4. Declaration of Interests and Consider Requests for Dispensation

8.h) Cllr Weston and Cllr Bernard declared a non-pecuniary interest as Village Hall Committee members.

5. To Approve the Minutes of the Meetings held on 3rd March 2025

The Minutes from the Meeting held on 3rd March 2025 were Approved unanimously as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

6. Matters Arising

a) Parking Next to Dropped Kerbs on Thwaite Road

Cllr Humphries reported that he had been contacted by two parishioners regarding concerns about vehicles parking next to dropped kerbs on Thwaite Road, which causes difficulty for those using mobility buggies (as reported at the March meeting). The Chair confirmed that a notice has been placed in the Parish Magazine asking residents to be more considerate when parking on Thwaite Road. However, he advised that there is little further the Parish Council can do, and noted that there are alternative locations nearby where users of mobility aids can safely access the pavement.

7. To Consider Co-option to fill the Casual Vacancies

None

8. Finance

a) To Approve the End of Year Accounts 2024-25

Councillors unanimously Approved the End of Year Balance Sheet 2024/25 (as attached).

b) To Approve the Internal Auditor's Report for 2024-25

Councillors Approved the Internal Auditor's Report 2024/25 (on website) and the Chair commended the Clerk for the excellent report with no Internal Audit recommendations.

c) To Approve the Annual Governance & Accountability Return Sections 1 & 2 2024-25

Councillors unanimously Approved the Annual Audit Return and the Chair and RFO signed the Annual Audit Return Sections 1 & 2.

d) To Appoint the Internal Auditor for 2025-26

Councillors unanimously Resolved to appoint the Internal Auditor Trevor Brown for 2024/25.

e) To Receive the Current Financial & Budget Reports & Approve Receipts & Payments

Councillors Resolved unanimously to Approve the Finance & Budget Report and Receipts & Payments (as attached).

f) To Consider Cemetery Lychgate Roof Repairs Quotations

Two quotations for repairs to the Lychgate roof had been received and discussed. Councillors agreed that they would like a further quotation for comparison. Cllr Swan offered to seek an additional quote and will make further efforts to obtain this. The Chair thanked Cllr Swan for his efforts. **Action: TS**

g) To Consider the Street Lighting Repairs Quotation

The Clerk has received the annual Street Light Survey from Cozens, the contractor, in March 2025. The survey included a list of necessary street light repairs and a quotation for the repairs and replacement of certain parts, with a subtotal of £1,603.

Councillors Resolved to Approve the quotation and funds to come out of the Street Light Restricted Reserve.

h) To Consider Granting the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Payment to the Village Hall Solar Panels Project

Cllr Weston and Cllr Bernard declare a non-pecuniary interest as Village Hall Committee members and did not vote.

Councillors Approved to Grant Ditchingham Village Hall the recent Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Payment of £1069.45 to the Village Hall Solar Panels Project.

i) Bungay Conservation Volunteers – Community Orchard

Councillors Agreed that the Bungay Conservation Volunteers should visit the Community Orchard twice a year, to maintain it to a satisfactory standard and care for the trees. It was suggested that the Parish Council would provide the volunteers with a grant for each visit in appreciation of their good work. Councillors Resolved the trees needed watering in this dry spell and requested the Clerk to organise.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Bernard said he would ask SNC to mow the orchard.

Action: BB

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

j) SNC VE Day Grant – update

The Clerk confirmed she had received a £300 grant from the South Norfolk Council VE Day Grant Scheme, which was used for the event held on Sunday, 12th May 2025, at the Village Hall.

k) Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant 2025 Commemoration Fund Grant - update

The Clerk confirmed she has also received a £300 grant from the Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant 2025 Commemoration Fund, which was used for the event held on Sunday, 12th May 2025, at the Village Hall.

Councillors Requested any leftover grant money to be placed in a restricted reserve for poppy wreaths for remembrance days.

9. To Receive the Planning Applications & Decisions Report

a) 2025/1083

Location: Land West of Loddon Road Ditchingham Norfolk

Proposal: Erection of 27 dwellings, vehicular access, pedestrian/cycle access, public open space, landscaping, and associated infrastructure

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Councillors Agreed that the application be carried and Recommended for Approval, subject to the following comments and recommendations:

1. Street Lighting: A lamp post should be installed at the entrance to the new estate to improve visibility and safety.

2. Public Transport Access: Councillors believe a bus stop at the entrance would be beneficial for residents and neighbouring properties, as the nearest existing stop is some distance away.

3. Pedestrian Connectivity: The internal walkway within the site boundary should continue to the left (inside the boundary and behind the trees to be retained) at the Loddon Road entrance, in order to connect onto the corner of Waveney Road and Loddon Road, to meet with the existing pavement leading down to the village. This would avoid the need for pedestrians to walk along Loddon Road, where there is currently no pavement, and would ensure a safe and continuous pedestrian route towards the village.

The Chair read out a list of planning applications and decisions made since the last meeting. Full details can be found on DPC's website: <https://ditchinghampc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/category/planning>.

10. To Receive Internal Reports from Committees

a) Chair's Report

- Thwaite Road Play Area BMX Track Consultation – c/f

b) Community Chair's Report

- VE & VJ Commemorative Event - Sunday 11th May – update

Councillors agreed that the event was very well attended and went smoothly. The unveiling of the memorial was well received, and everyone appreciated how well the event was organised and the afternoon tea. A great time was had by all.

c) Planning & Highways Chair's Report

- The Chair summarised his report (*attached*)

11. To Note Correspondence Received

a) Consultation: Norfolk and Suffolk Local Nature Recovery Strategies

Cllrs noted the above email from the Broads Authority:

<https://www.Norfolk+and+Suffolk+Local+Nature+Recovery+Strategies>

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

b) Public Spaces Protection Order (Dog Fouling & Dog Control) Renewal Consultation

The Chair and Clerk has responded positively to the Public Spaces Protection Order Renewal Consultation.

c) Concerns Raised Regarding Behaviour at The Dip Skate Park

The Chair informed Councillors of antisocial behaviour at The Dip Skate Park, including paint dabbed on the ground rail and various pieces of equipment, which he has since cleaned off. There were also reports of adults gathering on the skate park equipment.

d) Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Proposals – South Norfolk Council Consultation

South Norfolk Council has invited thoughts on the Government's proposed Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) as part of English devolution plans. The proposal suggests replacing the current two-tier system of district, borough, city, and county councils in Norfolk with new unitary authorities responsible for all local services. This aims to simplify service delivery, achieve financial stability, and enhance local community engagement. South Norfolk Council is seeking input from Parish and Town Councils by 13th June 2025 to understand their priorities and concerns.

[Councillors Agreed to the Chair responding to this consultation, with Councillors objecting to the proposed reorganisation.](#)

Action: Chair

12. To Consider Issues Not Decided by Committees

a) Village War Memorial – update

The Village War Memorial was completed and officially unveiled on Sunday, 11th May 2025. The project was planned, designed, and fully funded by parishioner Mr Andrew Evans-Hendrick, as no grants were secured and the Parish Council has no legal powers to construct a war memorial.

John Pettinger DCM, a Falklands War veteran who lives between Ditchingham and Broome, performed the unveiling. John was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) for his bravery during the conflict. He remains actively involved in the Royal British Legion, ensuring the memory of those who fell in combat is preserved.

Thanks were extended to Stephen and Harry Webb, engineers, who carried out the design and engineering work, and to Chris Sweeney, builder, for his excellent building work. The Parish Council acknowledged the significant personal cost and effort by Mr Evans-Hendrick in delivering this project. During the unveiling, Mr Evans-Hendrick gave personal thanks in memory of service personnel who lost their lives in World Wars I and II, as well as service personnel who have died since. He noted that the attending servicemen expressed their appreciation for the event and enjoyed the afternoon tea provided afterwards.

Mr Richard Murray contributed a display of World War I and II memorabilia, raising £164 for the Royal Anglian Benevolent Fund.

The Chair formally thanked Mr Evans-Hendrick for his dedication, generosity, and the outstanding contribution he has made to the village and its residents, and also thanked Mr Murray for his extensive display.

b) The Parishioner Parish Magazine – update

Mr Fred Hartwell, a member of the committee for *The Parishioner*, provided an update stating that advertising is improving, with more people taking up space in the magazine. However, there is a need for more content and articles to balance the advertisements. Another meeting will be held soon to discuss these issues.

c) Handyman – update

The Handyman has completed the current list of repairs and maintenance, with a small list accumulating for attention in the autumn. Councillors reported that wooden fence posts have fallen at Cheyne Walk, with some wooden posts showing signs of rot. The Chair requested that Cllr Tony Swan estimate the number of metal posts required to replace the damaged wooden ones.

Action: TS

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

13. Any Other Business

None

14. To Receive items for the Next Agenda

- a) To Consider Adopting the New War Memorial
- b) Lychgate Quotations
- c) Cheyne Walk Fence Quotation

15. To Note the Next Meeting Dates (*Planning Meetings arranged as required*)

- Monday 14th July 2025 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 8th September 2025 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 10th November 2025 - 7.30 pm

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

6. a) Finance Reports

Ditchingham Parish Council Finance Report - May 2025						
Community Account balance from the last meeting - b/f					£	9,109.41
Receipts Since the Last Report						
Date	Ref.	Details	Amount			
19/03/2025	credit	SNC - VE Day Grant	£ 300.00			
24/03/2025	cheque	Bierton & Woods Memorial - MCW	£ 45.00			
24/03/2025	credit	Norfolk Community Foundation- VE Day Grant	£ 300.00			
28/03/2025	credit	Rosedale - Cremation HJ	£ 160.00			
03/04/2025	Transfer	VAT Reclaim - 01/02/25-31/03/2025	£ 829.85			
09/04/2025	Cheque	Bierton & Woods - KMR Inscription	£ 45.00			
09/04/2025	Cheque	Abbey Memorials (Stonecraft) Ltd - JLH Inscription	£ 45.00			
17/04/2025	Transfer	SNC Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Payment	£ 1,069.45			
17/04/2025	Transfer	SNC Precept Payment (half)	£ 23,500.00			
			Total	+	£	26,294.30
Payments Since the Last Report						
28/02/2025	DD	Bank Service Charge	£ 6.00			
07/03/2025	D/D	Tomato Energy - Street Lights February 2025	£ 14.11			
07/03/2025	D/D	Tomato Energy - Street Lights February 2025	£ 54.77			
10/03/2025	D/D	Tomato Energy - Street Lights February 2025	£ 156.24			
13/03/2025	D/D	Tomato Energy - Street Lights February 2025	£ 25.87			
24/03/2025	57	Ditchingham Village Hall - Meetings	£ 40.50			
24/03/2025	58	Paul Forder - Mole Control on The Dip	£ 60.00			
24/03/2025	59	SNC - The Dip & TRPA Play Equipment Inspection	£ 150.00			
24/03/2025	60	Clerk - Mobile Phone Fees	£ 13.50			
24/03/2025	61	Excite Solutions Ltd - Grounds Maintenance December-February	£ 1,648.47			
24/03/2025	62	AND Surfacing - Tarmac The Dip Skatepark	£ 328.80			
24/03/2025	65	Excite Solutions Ltd - Grounds Maintenance Additional Cemetery	£ 1,380.00			
24/03/2025	64	Excite Solutions Ltd - Grounds Maintenance March (new contract)	£ 947.48			
28/03/2025	DD	Bank Service Charge	£ 6.00			
02/04/2025	S/O	Tomato Energy	£ 14.45			
02/04/2025	S/O	Tomato Energy	£ 56.11			
02/04/2025	S/O	Tomato Energy	£ 159.94			
23/04/2025	1	Excite Solutions Ltd - Play Area Additional Work	£ 288.00			
23/04/2025	2	Excite Solutions Ltd - Play Area Additional Work	£ 456.00			
23/04/2025	3	S. Cable - Handyman	£ 412.00			
23/04/2025	4	Clerk's Expenses April-May	£ 135.47			
28/04/2025	S/O	Tomato Energy	£ 24.53			
30/04/2025	Fee	Bank Service Charge	£ 6.00			
		Staff Costs February-April	£ 3,554.99			
			Total	-	£	9,939.23
			Total		£	25,464.48
Community Account Statement Balance					£	25,464.48
Uncleared receipts					£	-
Unpresented payments					-	£ -
			Total		£	25,464.48
Saver Accounts						
Unity Business Saver Account			£ 47,753.17			
Redwood Bank Business Saver Account			£ 86,983.97			
Total Savers Accounts					£	134,737.14
Total Balance in All Accounts					£	160,201.62

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

Ditchingham Parish Council - Budget Report 2025-26		May 2025			
Year End		Budget	Actual	Forecast	% of
2024-25		2025-26	Year to Date 2025-26	2025-26	Original Budget
	Receipts				
47,000	Precept	47,000	23,500.00	47,000	50%
1,840	Cemetery	1,500	90.00	1,500	6%
338	Allotment Rents	308	-	308	0%
4,601	Business Accounts Interest	2,500	-	2,500	0%
5,358	VAT Reclaim	5,000	829.85	5,000	17%
59,136	Total Budgeted Receipts	56,308	24,419.85	56,308	43%
	Un-Budgeted Receipts				
-	Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	0	1,069.45	1,069	1069
600	S106/Grants - SNC VE Day	0	-	-	-
400	Youth Shelter Payment	0	-	-	-
60,136	Total Receipts	56,308	25,489.30	57,377	-
	Budget Variance			1,069	
	Expenditure				
14,269	Staff Costs	15,167	1,193.21	15,167	8%
504	Clerk's Expenses	504	84.00	504	17%
1,349	General Expenses/Internal Audit/Subs/Bank Charges/Defib/Village Hall/etc.	2,000	48.90	2,000	2%
100	Allotment Rent to Land Owner	150	-	150	0%
1,350	10 x Dog Waste Bin Servicing Charge	1,450	-	1,450	0%
866	Insurance - 3 year contract 2022-2025	950	-	950	0%
210	Miscellaneous	500	-	500	0%
750	Parishioner Magazine Production Costs	750	-	750	0%
2,767	Cemetery Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,755	-	2,755	0%
2,148	The Dip Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,755	-	2,755	0%
1,872	Thwaite Road Play Area Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,755	620.00	2,755	23%
1,907	Village Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,755	412.00	2,755	15%
-	Tree Survey & Maintenance	2,600	-	2,600	0%
2,121	Street Lights Energy Annual Contract & Maintenance Contract 2022-2025	3,000	242.88	3,000	8%
1,000	Local Projects Grants - S137	1,000	-	1,000	0%
5,495	VAT Expenditure (to reclaim)	5,000	144.72	5,000	3%
206	General Maintenance	1,000	-	1,000	0%
5,567	Play Area's New Equipment & Repairs	9,500	-	9,500	0%
395	Street Lights/Columns -Repairs/LEDs/Removal/Replacements	2,000	-	2,000	0%
42,876	Total Budgeted Expenditure	56,591	2,745.71	56,591	5%
	Budget Variance	-283		-	
	Un-Budgeted Expenditure				
-	Community Projects - VE Day Event	0	-	-	0%
2,412	Village Improvements Reserve	0	-	-	0%
10,357	Play Area's New Equipment & Repairs	0	-	-	0%
-	S137/CIL Expenditure	0	-	-	0
55,645	Total Expenditure	56,308	2,745.71	56,591	-
4,491	Total Variance	0		786	
	Community Account Balance b/f		2,720.89		
60,136	Total Receipts per cashbook (less interest)		25,489.30		
55,645	Total Payments per cashbook		2,745.71		
2,721	UTB Community Account Balance		25,464.48		
134,737	UTB & Redwood Bank Saver Accounts (including interest)		134,737.14		
137,458	Total in Both Accounts		160,201.62		
23,508	General Reserves (should be at end of year 50% of precept - £23,500)		46,551.75		
113,950	Restricted Reserves		113,649.87		
137,458			160,201.62		
	Restricted and Earmarked Reserves	Received 2025/26	Spent 2025/26	Balance	
-	CIL Infrastructure Levy - Restricted			-	
11,683	Play Area New Equipment & Repairs Reserve - Earmarked			11,683	
2,000	Hollow Hill Community Orchard Grant - Restricted			2,000	
70,107	Street Lights Repairs/LEDs/Removal (74 Street lights) Grant - Restricted			70,107	
15,019	Grounds Maintenance Reserve - Earmarked			15,019	
8,148	Lychgate & Cemetery Maintenance Reserve - Earmarked			8,148	
6,093	Tree Maintenance Reserve - Earmarked			6,093	
-	VE Day Grants - Restricted	600.00		600	
-	Village Improvements Reserve - Earmarked			-	
113,050	Restricted and Earmarked Reserves			113,650	
23,508	General Reserves			46,552	
136,558				160,202	

Ditchingham Parish Council

10.c) Chair's Report to May 2025 Annual PC Meeting

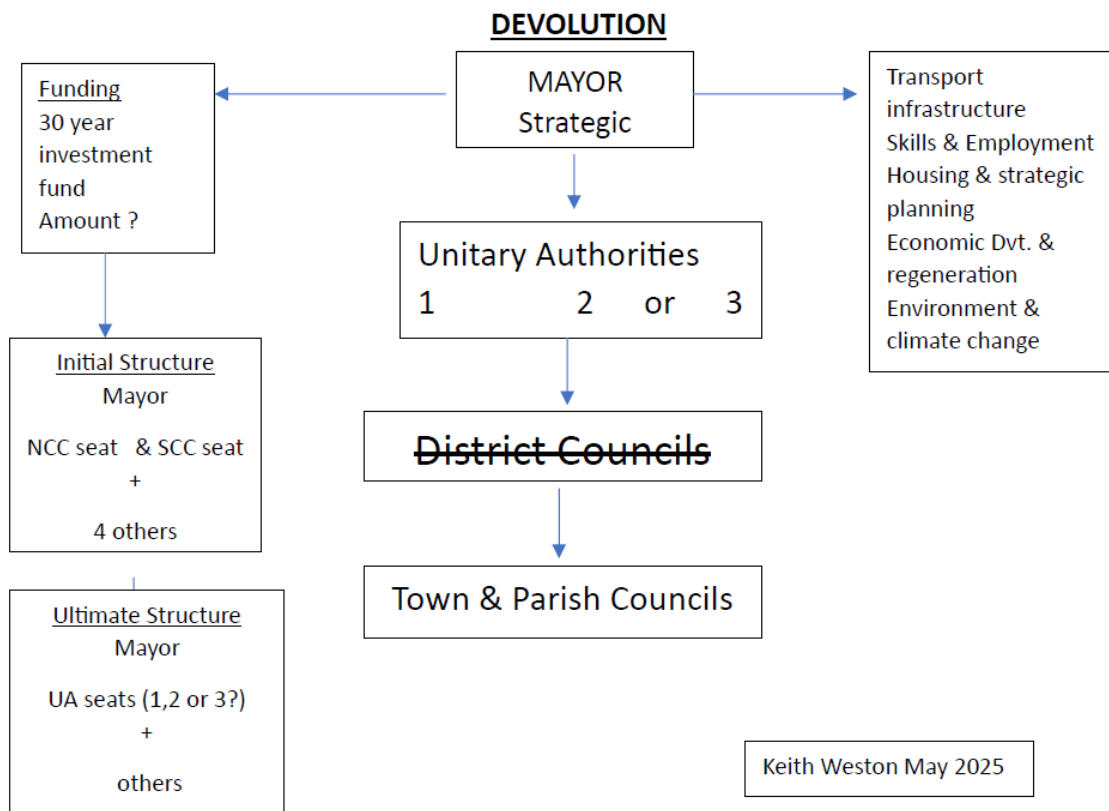
Report on Local Government Reorganisation Conference 2nd April 2025

I attended the conference to increase my limited knowledge on this subject and, to check whether my article in the April/May "Parishioner" was correct or would need corrections in a future issue. Although I thought my article was a case of the blind leading the partially sighted, I am pleased to say that it was broadly accurate.

Daniel Elmer, leader of SNC, said that SNC was keen to work with Broadland DC. SNC has been very efficient and has healthy reserves. These will be spent in SN to avoid them being absorbed into a larger area. SNC is backing the East/West model with two unitary authorities (UAs). It is thought that this model would be best for scale and efficiency and for transport and highways. SNC welcomes devolution.

Sue Holland, leader of BDC, said that devolution was being imposed. To get the best out of it BDC favours a three UA model. She also suggested that devolution would mean strategic decisions would be made by a very small number of people (Mayor + 4?)

In a Q&A session Daniel Elmer anticipated further roles and responsibilities (R&Rs) being devolved to parish councils (district council are being abolished under the UA model). However, PCs should assume no change to their R&Rs until told differently. They said a single UA model (the position taken by NCC) may make the best economic sense but economy is only one of many criteria to be considered.



Signed _____

Date _____