

Ditchingham Parish Council

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Ditchingham Village Hall

Monday 24th July 2023 – 7.30pm

Councillors: Keith Weston (Chair), Brendon Bernard (Vice Chair), Angela Gifford, Georgina Simmonds

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): Sally Chapman

Also Present: Twelve members of the public

Public Forum – for Members of the Public

Eleven Green Lane residents attended the meeting to report the following issues:

- Too many non-resident people using Green Lane
- There are many potholes.
- A streetlight has been removed.
- It is dangerous turning into the road.
- The left side of Green Lane is owned by Ditchingham Estate.
- The Green Lane residents would like the fence re-instated between Green Lane and Broome Heath's car parking area.

Green Lane is a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) over which the public have a right of way for vehicular and all other kinds of traffic.

The residents thanked DPC for listening to their concerns and DPC will try and facilitate a meeting between Norfolk County Council Highways and Ditchingham Estate.

External Reports

No reports

MINUTES

1. To Approve Apologies for Absence

None. Yvonne Daplyn has now resigned from the council.

2. Declaration of Interests and Consider Requests for Dispensation

None

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Meetings held on 15th May 2023

The Minutes from the Meetings held on 15th May 2023 were confirmed unanimously as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

From the minutes not on the agenda, nor included in the committee reports.

None

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

Mr Andrew Evans-Hendrick stood for co-option and gave a brief résumé.

Councillors resolved unanimously to co-opt Mr Evans-Hendrick onto the Council and gave him a warm welcome.

Mr Evans-Hendrick signed the Acceptance of Office document and joined the meeting.

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

6. Finance

a) To Appoint the Internal Auditor for 2023-24 – update

The RFO advised Mr Trevor Brown has agreed to carry out the Internal Audit for 2023-24.

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

The bank statement and reports were signed by the Chair.

Councillors unanimously resolved to approve the Finance & Budget Report and Receipts & Payments (attached) and to transfer £30,000 from Barclays Saver Account to Unity Trust Saver Account.

Action: KW/Clerk

c) The King's Coronation Plaque – update

The Chair confirmed the King's Coronation Plaque has now been affixed to the village sign and thanked Mr Richard Mulley for doing this.

d) Village War Memorial Grant – update

The RFO reported she has not been successful in obtaining a grant for £2,200 to purchase the plaques. The handyman will still repair the base and lay slabs around the sign to protect the base in future.

Councillors agreed to reconsider the plaques when more Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money has been received.

e) Grounds Maintenance - Additional Work

Community Orchard

The Chair agreed to cut the paths again and South Norfolk & Broadland District Council (SNBDC) will continue in August.

Action: KW

Goal Mouths Repair

Councillors agreed to accept the quotation of £180 and asked for the work to be completed in the autumn.

Action: Clerk

f) Play Area Roundabout Refurbishment - update

The roundabout refurbishment has been completed to a very high standard and is in place in Thwaite Road Play Area.

g) To Consider a Poppy Wreath for Remembrance Day

Councillors agreed to re-use last year's wreath, as it is still in good condition and instead donate £20.00 to the Royal British Legion.

Action: Clerk

Mr Richard Mulley kindly agreed to refresh the wreath ready for Remembrance Sunday.

7. Planning and Highways

a) To Receive the Planning Applications & Decisions Report

The Chair read out the list of Planning Applications & Decisions since the last meeting. The full list is on DPCs website: <https://ditchinghampc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/category/planning>

b) Hamilton Way's Additional Houses

Cllr Bernard reported no further has been heard re the additional 35 houses added to the planning application and will pursue.

Action: BB

8. To receive Internal Reports from Committees (if required)

a) Chair's Report

The Chair read out his report (attached), answered questions and agreed to forward it to The Parish Magazine.

Action: KW

b) Community Chair's Report

The Dip & Play Area Annual Inspection

The Clerk advised she had received the Dip & Play Area Annual Inspection reports and has drawn up an action list.

To Consider Change of Play Area Inspectors

Councillors resolved to use David Bracey Play Safety Inspections to complete the June 2024 inspections.

Action: Clerk

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

Cheyne Walk

Cllr Gifford reported Cheyne Walk requires some attention and will send the Clerk photographs.

Action: AG

c) Planning & Highways Chair's Report

The Chair read out his report (*attached*) and advised:

Dangerous Crossing at Pirnhow Street, Ditchingham

The Chair has requested Malting's management to reduce the size of the Beech hedge to aid visibility at the junction.

Chicken Roundabout Lectern – update

A suggestion has been made to approach a local business to fund the lectern.

[Councillors agreed a letter to be sent to the local business requesting funding for the lectern.](#)

Action: KW/Clerk

Hollow Hill Pavement

The Chair sincerely thanked Mr Richard Mulley for clearing and sweeping the dangerous pavement on Hollow Hill on Norwich Road, which took him three days and all his voluntary work around the village.

9. To Consider Issues Not Decided by Committees

a) Hollow Hill Community Orchard - update

Wildflowers

The Chair reported the wildflowers planted by volunteers in the Play Area and Community Orchard are growing and doing well.

Watering Arrangement

The watering of the newly planted trees and hedges has been done weekly since the beginning of June and South Norfolk & Broadland District Council (SNBDC) has continued since July.

To Consider Proposals to Purchase Signs for the Community Orchard

[Councillors resolved to purchase an information sign for the entrance of the orchard.](#)

The Clerk informed she is waiting for a sketch of an Oak Sign for the metal gate.

Action: Clerk

b) Invitation to Bid for Parish Partnership 2024/25 - For Local Highway Improvements

The Chair asked Cllrs to consider projects for the village and note the closing date is December 2023.

c) Consider actions the PC can take to recruit more Councillors

Cllrs discussed and the Chair suggested sending information to local community groups and Cllr

Gifford produced a simpler poster for circulation.

Action: Clerk

10. To Note Correspondence Received

a) Ditchingham United Charities Annual Report 2022-23

The Chair read out the received report (*attached*).

11. Any Other Business

None

12. To Receive items for the Next Agenda

a) Green Lane Meeting & Issues

The Clerk was asked to ask NCC Highways the protocol re NCC responsibility for a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT).

13. To Confirm the Next Meeting Dates (*Planning Meetings arranged as required*)

- Monday 18th September 2023 at 7.30pm
- Monday 20th November 2023 at 7.30pm

The meeting ended at 9.24pm

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

6.b) Financial Report

Ditchingham Parish Council Finance Report - July 2023					
Community Account balance from the last meeting - b/f				£	28,024.32
Receipts since Last Report					
Date	Ref.	Payee	Amount		
23/05/2023	credit	Co-op - Memorial	£ 115.00		
23/05/2023	credit	Co-op - Memorial	£ 115.00		
04/07/2023	Credit	Cossey Funeral Services - Burial	£ 255.00		
05/07/2023	credit	VAT Reclaim 01/03/2023-30/06/2023	£ 1,086.47		
05/07/2023	credit	Cossey Funeral Services - Memorial	£ 45.00		
			Total	£	1,616.47
Payments since the last Report					
23/05/2023	s/o	SSE Street Lighting Energy - April	£ 332.20		
23/05/2023	12	Angela Gifford - Coronation Expenses	£ 52.51		
23/05/2023	13	Ann Mulley - cable ties	£ 3.00		
23/05/2023	14	Georgina Simmonds - Coronation Expenses	£ 140.31		
23/05/2023	15	Excite Solutions - Grounds Maintenance final 2022-23 contract	£ 2,480.03		
31/05/2023	S/O	SSE Street Lighting Energy - May	£ 343.10		
19/06/2023	16	The Sign Shed - permissive path signs	£ 10.80		
19/06/2023	17	Norfolk Parish Training & Support - Clerk's Training	£ 60.00		
19/06/2023	19	NALC - Payroll Services	£ 55.20		
19/06/2023	20	Excite Solutions - Grounds Maintenance March-May	£ 1,648.50		
19/06/2023	21	Bungay & District Ass/Malting's Meadow Sports - Grant	£ 2,000.00		
30/06/2023	S/O	Bank Charge (Unity Trust)	£ 18.00		
05/07/2023	22	The Play Inspection Company - Play Equipment Annual Inspection	£ 175.08		
05/07/2023	23	PlayQuip UK Ltd - Roundabout Refurbishment	£ 3,799.20		
05/07/2023	25	Excite Solutions - Grounds Maintenance June	£ 549.49		
11/07/2023	26	B. D. Coe - Community Orchard Watering in June	£ 360.00		
11/07/2023	27	Ann Mulley - cleaning equipment	£ 25.72		
May & June		Staff Salaries	£ 2,451.40		
			Total	-	£ 14,504.54
			Total		£ 15,136.25
Community Account Statement Balance					£ 18,759.51
Uncleared receipts					£ 1,386.47
Unpresented payments				-	£ 5,009.73
			Total		£ 15,136.25
Unity Business Saver Account				£	36,364.84
Barclays Business Saver Account				£	85,367.30
Total Savers Accounts					£ 121,732.14
Total Balance in All Accounts					£ 136,868.39

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

6.b) Budget Reports

Ditchingham Parish Council - Budget Report 2023-24		July 2023				
			Actual		% of	
Year End		Budget	Year to Date	Forecast	Original	Notes
2022-23		2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	Budget	
	Income					
38,100	Precept	40,000	20,000	40,000	50%	
3,925	Cemetery	2,000	785	2,000	39%	
245	Allotment Rents	308	0	308	0%	Plots £12 each/double £20
546	Business Account Interest	200	381	381	191%	
6,575	VAT Reclaim	5,000	1,086	1,086	22%	
49,391	Total Budgeted Income	47,508	22,253	43,776	47%	
-	Thwaite Road Play Area Cashbox	0	0	0	-	
15,065	Community Infrastructure Levy	0	550	550	-	
-	SNC - Coronation Grant	0	200	200	0%	
2,200	S106 Grants	0	0	0	-	
66,656	Total Income	47,508	23,002	44,525	-	
	Expenditure					
12,239	Staff Costs	13,339	4,589	4,589	34%	
396	Clerk's Expenses	504	84	84	17%	
1,610	General Expenses/Internal Audit/Subscriptions/Bank Charges/etc.	2,000	1,200	1,200	60%	
100	Allotment Rent to Land Owner	150	0	0	0%	
1,106	Dog Waste Bin Servicing Charge	1,200	0	0	0%	
780	Insurance - 3 year contract 2022-2025	780	0	0	0%	
-	Miscellaneous	500	0	0	0%	
750	Parishioner Magazine & Website Production Costs	750	0	0	0%	
1,318	Cemetery Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,000	975	975	49%	Includes an invoice from 2022/23
1,262	The Dip Maintenance & Grass Cutting	1,700	1,048	1,048	62%	Includes an invoice from 2022/23
2,017	Thwaite Road Play Area Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,500	1,048	1,048	42%	Includes an invoice from 2022/23
2,677	Village Maintenance & Grass Cutting	3,100	1,344	1,344	43%	Includes an invoice from 2022/23
3,272	Tree Survey & Maintenance	2,600	0	0	0%	
1,051	Street Lights Energy Contract to 31/05/2024 & Maintenance Contract 2022-2	5,000	1,408	1,408	28%	
16	Local Projects Grants - S137	1,000	2,000	2,000	200%	Deducted reserves £1,000
5,396	VAT Expenditure	5,000	1,660	1,660	33%	
2,170	General Maintenance (Handyman)	5,000	2,826	2,826	57%	
905	Community Projects (Jubilee/Coronation Events)	1,000	188	188	19%	
37,067	Total Budgeted Expenditure	48,123	18,368	18,368	38%	
29,589	Budget Variance	-615	3,885	25,408		
-	Play Area New Equipment & Repairs	0	3,166	3,166	-	Taken off reserves
15,745	Street Lights/Columns -Repairs/LEDs/Removal/Replacements	2,000	0	0	0%	
1,571	S137/CIL Expenditure	0	0	0	-	
54,382	Total Expenditure	50,123	21,534	18,368	-	
12,274	Variance	-2,615	1,468	26,157		
			1,374			
36,433	Community Account Balance b/f		12,930.25			
65,880	Total Receipts per cashbook (less interest)		22,366.03			
54,382	Total Payments per cashbook		20,160.03			
12,930	Community Account Balance		15,136.25			
121,351	Business Saver Accounts (including interest)		121,732.14			
134,281	Total in Both Accounts		136,868.39			
19,065	General Reserves		25,269.10			
115,216	Restricted Reserves		111,599.29			
134,281			136,868.39			

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

8.a) Chair's Report

Chair's Report to July 23 Parish Council Meeting

I have nothing significant to report that is not covered in my Planning & Highways Chair's Report. However, I do want to use this opportunity to raise awareness of the lack of resilience, as I see it, of the Parish Council.

We have, like many parish and town councils, just a small number of Councillors elected unopposed because there were insufficient nominees for a ballot in May. Some years ago we got the substantive number of Councillors for this parish reduced from eleven to nine. Even so, we have never reached the latter. At the time of writing we only have four Councillors – myself (Keith Weston), Brendon Bernard, Angela Gifford and Georgina Simmonds. The quorum is three. Even if we are able to co-opt a new Councillor soon I think we should make strenuous effort to recruit more.

Because we have such an experienced and able Clerk and RFO, in Sally Chapman, Councillors' duties are not onerous. However, with the potential for Councillor absences we could easily find a future meeting inquorate. Folk who read my recent article in "The Parishioner" will have understood the relevance of the Parish Council. Without its funding and monitoring of the community's assets they would soon deteriorate.

At item 9c of this meeting I want the Council to consider what we might be able to do to recruit more members.

Keith Weston

8.c) Planning & Highways Chair's Report

Ditchingham Parish Council Planning & Highways Committee Chair's Report to July 2023 Meeting

Planning

Regarding the list of Planning Applications:

There were no controversial applications, in this period, that have, in my judgement, warranted a planning committee meeting. I have liaised with the Clerk and we have made neutral comments (if any).

I am pleased that the proposal at 4 Lambert's Way is "approved with conditions." The applicant spoke to DPC some time ago and we did not object to the plan. There was some confusion over this later.

Highways

My efforts to get the sight lines at the dangerous crossing at The Maltings improved have continued without success. I have made further attempts to contact Charlotte Mc Kinley, Trinity Estates property manager for Ditchingham Maltings, and have asked her to visit to see the problem for herself.

I suspended my work on a design for a lectern style notice board at Chicken Roundabout until there was some prospect of funding. We are now pursuing a suggestion that a local business could be asked for sponsorship.

Keith Weston

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

10.a) Ditchingham United Charities Report 2023

The Annual General Meeting of Ditchingham United Charities was held at Ditchingham Village Hall on Wednesday 24th May 2023.

- Two new Parish appointed Trustees; Simon Wilkin & Laura Myatt attended their first DUC meeting.
- Two Co-opted Trustees, Gillian Ogden & Geoffrey Fairhead also agreed to continue for another five-year term.
- Keith Weston and Reginald Kirkpatrick have agreed to continue for another four-year term, as their term of office had come to an end in 2022, but all agreed that as they had continued, thankfully, their four-year term would now come up for discussion in 2027.
- Mr. Keith Weston was also appointed to continue as Village Hall representative of DUC.

Sally Thomson

Hon.Clerk/Treasurer - Ditchingham United Charities

Signed _____

Date _____