

Ditchingham Parish Council

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Ditchingham Village Hall

Monday 14th July 2025 - 7.30 pm

Councillors: Keith Weston (Chair), Angela Gifford, Andrew Evans-Hendrick, Neil Humphries, Gill Oliver and Tony Swan

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): Sally Chapman

Also Present: 5 Parishioners

A. Parishioners' Matters of Concern

- Bungay Royal British Legion Letter of Thanks

The Chair read a letter of thanks from the Bungay Royal British Legion expressing gratitude for the £200 donation from Ditchingham Village Hall and Parish Council, raised through the VE Day celebration raffle. The letter also praised the new memorial as a fitting tribute to the fallen.

- Village Fête 2026

Melissa Lloyd, who works at Tiny Tots Stay & Play, play group based in Ditchingham, attended the meeting to outline her plans for organising a village fête in 2026. Councillors welcomed the proposal and expressed their support and thanks.

- Thwaite Road Play Area – BMX Track Proposal

Parishioners Jonny and Ed VanDijk attended the meeting to express their interest in improving the BMX track at Thwaite Road Play Area. They had carried out a survey at the local village school to gauge interest and shared details of a track design they believe would be suitable for the site. Councillors thanked them for their initiative and agreed to arrange a site meeting.

- Drug Concerns

A member of the public spoke at the meeting about drug-related issues in Ditchingham, particularly the use of drugs in the Dip Play Area and around the nearby housing estate. Councillors thanked him for sharing this information and advised that the matter would be discussed further under agenda item 9.b).

- Village Cleaner Resignation

Mr Richard Mulley informed the Council that he has now formally handed in his notice as village cleaner, a role he and his late wife had carried out with dedication for the past decade. The Chair and Councillors expressed their sincere thanks to Mr Mulley for his long-standing service and valuable contribution to the community.

B. County Councillor and District Councillor External Reports

County Councillor Barry Stone sent apologies and a report:

<https://ditchingham-pc.gov.uk/category/meetings>. No report from District Councillor Brendon Bernard.

MINUTES

1. To Approve Apologies for Absence

Absent with no apologies Councillor Bernard.

2. Declaration of Interests and Consider Requests for Dispensation

Cllr Evans-Hendrick declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 9.c), as he knows a landowner who is considering the installation of solar panels on their farmland.

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th May 2025

The Minutes from the Meeting held on 12th May 2025 were Approved unanimously as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

4. Matters Arising

None

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

None

6. Finance

a) Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) External Audit Form – Receipt

Cllrs noted that the Responsible Financial Officer had submitted the AGAR External Audit Form, had been submitted and a formal receipt of submission had been acknowledged.

b) To Appoint the Internal Auditor for 2025-26 – update

The RFO confirmed that Mr Trevor Brown had agreed to undertake the Internal Audit for the 2025/26 financial year, scheduled for April 2026.

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

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

d) To Review and Consider Insurance Quotations

Councillors Resolved to accept the quotation from CAS Parish Protect Insurance under a 3-year Long-Term Agreement (LTA) at a cost of £1,003.76.

Action: Clerk

e) To Consider Cemetery Lychgate Roof Repairs Quotations

Councillors considered three quotations for the repair of the Lychgate Roof and Resolved to accept the quotation from CM Robinson Roofing Limited.

f) To Consider Joining CPRE Norfolk Anti Mega Solar Alliance

Councillors Agreed to join the free CPRE Norfolk Anti Mega Solar Alliance.

Action: Clerk

g) To Consider Parish Partnership Scheme for Local Highway Improvements

Cllrs considered the Parish Partnership Scheme and agreed to carry forward to the next meeting. In the meantime, they will consider potential highway improvements.

h) Street Lighting Repairs – update

The RFO confirmed that all street lighting repairs, as listed in the report presented at the March meeting, had been completed. It was reported one of the Windmill Green street lamps were shining blue (LED lamp breaking down).

Action: Clerk

i) Bungay Conservation Volunteers – Community Orchard – update

It was noted that Ditchingham Community Orchard will be added to the Bungay Conservation Volunteers' calendar of activities.

7. To Receive the Planning Applications & Decisions Report

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>.

8. To Receive Internal Reports from Committees

a) Chair's Report (attached)

The Chair summarised his report and answered questions.

- Thwaite Road Play Area BMX Track Consultation – update

Councillors Resolved to investigate options for improving the BMX track at Thwaite Road Play Area. It was agreed to arrange a site meeting to discuss proposals further.

Action: Clerk/KW/AG/AEH/NH

b) Community Chair's Report

Cllr Gifford reported that the new Baker Lane sign located down Drapers Lane has disappeared from the roadside.

Action: Clerk

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

c) Planning & Highways Chair's Report (*attached*)

The Chair summarised his report and answered questions

9. To Note Correspondence Received

a) Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk

The Clerk informed councillors that information regarding the Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk had been circulated to all members and posted on the Parish Council's website.

b) Concerns Raised About Behaviour at The Dip Skate Park

Cllrs discussed concerns re drug use at The Dip Play Area and in the surrounding local estates. Cllr Humphries advised that he would monitor the situation and liaise with the police to address the issue.

c) Phase Two Statutory Consultation for East Pye Solar

Cllr Evans-Hendrick declared a non-pecuniary interest and did not comment or vote.

Councillors Resolved to respond to the Phase Two statutory consultation for East Pye Solar.

The Clerk will circulate the consultation questions and request Cllrs to submit their comments directly to her to summarise a PC response.

Action: Clerk

10. To Consider Issues Not Decided by Committees

a) Cheyne Walk – Wooden Posts Replacement

Cllr Swan reported on his inspection of the wooden posts at Cheyne Walk, noting that most are rotten. He recommended replacing them with metal posts and new wire and agreed to obtain quotations for the work.

Action: TS

b) To Consider a Village Fete

Councillors agreed to support Melissa Lloyd in organising a village fête at The Dip Play Area in 2026.

c) Tree Warden - Basic Tree Survey & Inspection course – 10th October 2025

Cllrs noted that Cllr Neil Humphries had kindly agreed to be DPC's Tree Warden and would attend the Basic Tree Survey & Inspection course on 10th October 2025.

11. Any Other Business

None

12. To Receive items for the Next Agenda

a) To Consider Parish Partnership Scheme for Local Highway Improvements

b) Armed Forces Covenant for Town & Parish Councils

c) To Consider proposals for the Thwaite Road Play Area BMX Track

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

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

The meeting ended at 9. 47 pm

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

6. a) Finance Reports

Ditchingham Parish Council Finance Report - July 2025						
Community Account balance from the last meeting - b/f					£	25,464.48
Receipts Since the Last Report						
Date	Ref.	Details	Amount			
12/05/2025	Cheque	Bierton & Woods - JER Memorial	£ 115.00			
06/06/2025	Transfer	Rosedale Funerals - JP & JR	£ 670.00			
			Total	+	£	785.00
Payments Since the Last Report						
02/05/2025	6	Tomato Energy	£ 13.78			
02/05/2025	7	Tomato Energy	£ 54.43			
02/05/2025	8	Tomato Energy	£ 154.90			
21/05/2025	9	Tomato Energy	£ 23.86			
21/05/2025	10	Trevor Brown - Internal Audit 2022/23	£ 328.80			
21/05/2025	11	Excite Solutions Ltd - Grounds Maintenance April & May	£ 1,894.86			
21/05/2025	12	Keith Weston - Stationery	£ 37.85			
21/05/2025	13	David Coe - TRPA - Zip Wire Maintenance	£ 50.00			
21/05/2025	14	Cozens UK Ltd - Quarterly Maintenance Charge	£ 108.00			
21/05/2025	15	NALC Annual Subscription	£ 427.59			
21/05/2025	16	Station366 - Singing Group VE Day	£ 135.00			
21/05/2025	17	VE Day - Raffle Prizes	£ 47.85			
21/05/2025	18	VE Day - Food	£ 140.16			
21/05/2025	19	VE Day Supplies & Food	£ 213.51			
31/05/2025	Fee	Bank Service Charge	£ 6.00			
06/06/2025	20	Tomato Energy	£ 14.45			
06/06/2025	21	Tomato Energy	£ 56.11			
06/06/2025	22	Tomato Energy	£ 159.94			
06/06/2025	23	Tomato Energy	£ 20.16			
30/06/2025	Fee	Bank Service Charge	£ 6.00			
30/06/2025	24	Cozens (UK) Ltd - Street Light Repairs	£ 1,923.60			
30/06/2025	25	Ditchingham Village Hall - Grant	£ 1,069.45			
30/06/2025	27	Clerk's Expenses June-July	£ 109.30			
30/06/2025	28	David Coe - Community Orchard Watering	£ 350.00			
03/07/2025	29	NALC - Website Hosting	£ 84.00			
May-June		Staff Costs	£ 1,356.18			
				-	£	8,785.78
Community Account Statement Balance			Total		£	3,059.45
Uncleared receipts					£	-
Unpresented payments				-	£	3,595.75
Transfers between Community and Saver Accounts					£	5,000.00
			Total		£	4,463.70
Saver Accounts						
Unity Business Saver Account			£ 60,097.99			
Redwood Bank Business Saver Account			£ 87,838.70			
Total Savers Accounts					£	147,936.69
Total Balance in All Accounts					£	152,400.39

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

Ditchingham Parish Council - Budget Report 2025-26		July 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	875.00	1,500	58%
338	Allotment Rents	308	-	308	0%
4,601	Business Accounts Interest	2,500	1,199.55	2,500	48%
5,358	VAT Reclaim	5,000	829.85	5,000	17%
59,136	Total Budgeted Receipts	56,308	26,404.40	56,308	47%
	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	27,473.85	57,377	-
	Budget Variance			1,069	
	Expenditure				
14,269	Staff Costs	15,167	3,549.39	15,167	23%
504	Clerk's Expenses	504	168.00	504	33%
1,349	General Expenses/Internal Audit/Subs/Bank Charges/Defib/Village Hall/etc.	2,000	939.91	2,000	47%
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	394.68	2,755	14%
2,148	The Dip Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,755	394.79	2,755	14%
1,872	Thwaite Road Play Area Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,755	1,014.78	2,755	37%
1,907	Village Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,755	394.79	2,755	14%
-	Tree Survey & Maintenance	2,600	-	2,600	0%
2,121	Street Lights Energy Annual Contract & Maintenance Contract 2022-2025	3,000	806.80	3,000	27%
1,000	Local Projects Grants - S137	1,000	-	1,000	0%
5,495	VAT Expenditure (reclaimed)	5,000	868.53	5,000	17%
206	General Maintenance (handyman)	1,000	412.00	1,000	41%
5,567	Play Area's New Equipment & Repairs	9,500	50.00	9,500	1%
395	Street Lights/Columns -Repairs/LEDs/Removal/Replacements	2,000	1,603.00	2,000	80%
42,876	Total Budgeted Expenditure	56,591	10,596.67	56,591	19%
	Budget Variance	-283		-	
	Un-Budgeted Expenditure				
-	Community Orchard	0	350.00	350	0%
-	Community Projects - VE Day Event	0	515.37	515	0%
2,412	Village Improvements Reserve	0	-	-	0%
10,357	Play Area's New Equipment & Repairs	0	-	-	0%
-	S137/CIL Expenditure	0	1,069.45	-	0
55,645	Total Expenditure	56,591	12,531.49	57,456	-
4,491	Total Variance	-283		(79)	
	Community Account Balance b/f		2,720.89		
60,136	Total Receipts per cashbook (less interest)		26,274.30		
55,645	Total Payments per cashbook		12,531.49		
2,721	UTB Community Account Balance		4,463.70		
134,737	UTB & Redwood Bank Saver Accounts (including interest)		147,936.69		
137,458	Total in Both Accounts		152,400.39		
23,508	General Reserves (should be at end of year 50% of precept - £23,500)		40,318.89		
113,950	Restricted Reserves		112,081.50		
137,458			152,400.39		
	Restricted and Earmarked Reserves	Received 2025/26	Spent 2025/26	Balance	
-	CIL Infrastructure Levy - Restricted	1,069.45	(1,069.45)	-	To DVH
11,683	Play Area New Equipment & Repairs Reserve - Earmarked			11,683	
2,000	Community Orchard Grant - Restricted		(350.00)	1,650	
70,107	Street Lights Repairs/LEDs/Removal (74 Street lights) Grant - Restricted		(1,603.00)	68,504	
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	515.37	84.63	
900	Village Improvements Reserve - Earmarked			900	
113,950	Restricted and Earmarked Reserves			112,082	
23,508	General Reserves			40,319	
137,458				152,400	

Ditchingham Parish Council

8.a) Chair's Report

DITCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR'S REPORT TO JULY 2025 MEETING

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

I haven't responded further to any consultations. I could not find a consultation other than the one DPC has already responded to.

NALC and SNC are organising an online information sharing opportunity, on LGR. I have expressed an interest in participating.

Use of the PC Community Noticeboard

A parishioner contacted us saying that advertising, of services and items for sale, should be removed. These don't breach our advertised "rules." I have renewed the terms of use with slightly altered wording as follows. I hope this makes it clear and the final sentence gives me options if some posters Etc. "out stay their welcome" or don't comply.

DITCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

This community noticeboard is for the use of parishioners. Information about activities and events can be displayed here but, please do not advertise until four weeks beforehand and remove info soon after the event. To share the available space fairly, please use A4 paper or smaller. Items for sale and services may be advertised but please use only up to A5 or postcard size. Local postings will take precedence over others. All postings in the community noticeboard should include contact details please. The Parish Council will remove items at its discretion.

The future of the bike track at the Thwaite Road Play Area

Responses to the consultation are included in your papers. If the Council decides to maintain the track, I should be very grateful if Cllr. Gifford, with the help of other Councillors and our Clerk, could take this forward. In the first instance it would be worth liaising with the respondent who has offered to help. Additionally, the following from County Cllr Stone may be relevant:

Norfolk County Council Approves £500k Community Fund to Boost Local Projects

Aimed at supporting grassroots projects that strengthen communities and improve local wellbeing.

The fund will empower local voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) groups to apply for grants between £200 and £2,500 to deliver small-scale initiatives that bring people together, promote inclusion, and enhance quality of life. Each of the county's 84 councillors will be allocated £5,000 to distribute within their divisions, ensuring funding reaches every corner of Norfolk.

The 2025–26 programme will prioritise projects that support ageing well, youth engagement, community cohesion, and cultural connection.

War Memorial

With my agreement our Clerk has added the war memorial to the Council's assets for insurance purposes.

Keith Weston

July 2025

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

8.c) Planning & Highways Report

DITCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL P & H CHAIR'S REPORT TO JULY 2025 MEETING

Planning

There have been no contentious planning applications since our last Council meeting.
An Enforcement Report was received about land at the end of Hamilton Way having been landscaped.
The site looks tidy now.

Highways

I reported, to NCC, the broken directional sign at Chicken Roundabout. It has not been repaired yet; I imagine it's quite low priority.

Our Speed Awareness Machine (SAM) is faulty. In collaboration with our Clerk I packaged it up and it was returned to Westcotec for assessment/repair. They reported that repairs costing just over £200 are needed. As this is much less than a new SAM, I have told them to proceed.

Keith Weston
July 2025

Signed _____

Date _____