

Ditchingham Parish Council

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Ditchingham Village Hall

Monday 2nd March 2026 - 7.30 pm

Councillors: Keith Weston (Chair), Brendon Bernard (Vice Chair), Angela Gifford, Neil Humphries, Tony Swan, Ed van Dijk and Stephen Young

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): Sally Chapman

Also Present: District Councillor Brendon Bernard and one Parishioner

A. Parishioners' Matters of Concern

A parishioner thanked DPC for arranging the removal of the flags from Chicken Roundabout on the A143.

B. County Councillor and District Councillor External Reports

- **County Councillor Barry Stone** sent apologies
- **District Councillor Brendon Bernard** – no report

MINUTES

1. To Approve Apologies for Absence

Apologies were Approved and Accepted from Cllr Oliver.

Absent: Cllr Evans-Hendrick.

2. Declaration of Interests and Consider Requests for Dispensation

None

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th January 2026

The Minutes from the Meeting held on Monday 12th January 2026 were Approved unanimously as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

Matters arising from the minutes that are not on the agenda or included in the committee reports.

a) Bungay Banking Hub

Cllr Humphries reported that the local MP Adrian Ramsey had raised the lack of banking provision in Bungay in Parliament. Despite support from Bungay Town Council, DPC and the local community, the request has been refused.

In its response to Bungay Town Council, East Suffolk Council stated that residents of Bungay could travel by bus to Harleston to access banking services. It was noted that this does not adequately support elderly residents, those unable to manage online banking, or residents who are disabled or infirm.

5. Finance

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

Councillors Resolved unanimously to Approve the Finance & Budget and Receipts & Payment Reports.

b) To Consider a Bench for the Community Orchard

Councillors Agreed to purchase a four-seat bench from NBB Recycled Furniture at a cost of £280 plus £20 delivery, exclusive of VAT – carried

c) To Consider a Fete Grant to the Ditchingham Events Committee

Councillors Resolved to award a grant of £500 to the Ditchingham Events Committee towards the forthcoming fete.

The Clerk requested that all relevant invoices be made out to Ditchingham Parish Council.

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

d) To Consider General Reserves Balances

Councillors Approved the Clerk to vire any General Reserves balances exceeding 50% of the precept to the Play Area restricted reserve.

e) To Note the Internal Auditor's Inspection Date – 13th April 2026

Cllrs noted the above date.

f) Cheyne Walk Fence – update

Cllrs were informed that the contractor could not supply all the required concrete posts. They are considering alternative recycled plastic posts and will seek the landowner's approval before purchasing them and instructing the contractor to install them.

g) Thwaite Road Play Area BMX Track – update

Cllr van Dyke presented concepts for a replacement BMX track at Thwaite Road Play Area and The Dip, including approximate costings. He is now pursuing grant funding for the project. Cllrs raised concerns regarding visitor parking.

h) Cemetery Lychgate Roof Repairs – update

Cllr Swan reported that the Cemetery Lychgate roof repairs have now been completed. A soffit requires painting and a gutter bracket need replacing, which Cllr Swan kindly offered to complete. **Action: TS**

6. 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: [Link](#)

7. To Consider St Mary's Churchyard, Ditchingham Maintenance Responsibility

The Parochial Church Council of the above church and parish hereby requests the Ditchingham Parish Council to take over responsibility for the maintenance of the said churchyard pursuant to section 215(2) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Councillors Resolved unanimously not to assume responsibility or any associated matters, for the maintenance of St Mary's Churchyard, Ditchingham and agreed that it should be deferred to South Norfolk Council. **Action: Clerk**

8. Annual Review of Policies & Statutory Documents

Councillors Resolved unanimously to approve all Policies and Statutory Documents as listed.

a) Asset Register - updated

b) Biodiversity Policy

c) Committees Terms of Reference

d) Council Policies

e) Councillor Code of Conduct

f) Data Retention and Disposal Policy

g) Financial Regulations

h) Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

i) General Data Protection Regulations Policy, Privacy Notice & Data Information Audit

j) Information Technology Policy - new

k) Risk Assessment

l) Standing Orders

The Chair thanked the Clerk for her diligence in keeping policies and statutory documents up to date and compliant with the latest legislation.

9. To Receive Internal Reports from Committees/Councillors

a) Chair's Report

No further report

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

b) Community Chair's Report

- Event Organising Working Party – *update*

Cllr Gifford provided an update on her report (*attached*). The Clerk was requested to organise a Risk Assessment, Insurance and an NCC Events Licence.

Action: Clerk

- Play Areas Maintenance – *update*

The Chair informed Councillors that the list of minor repairs at Thwaite Road Play Area had been completed by the Handyman. The Handyman had inspected the zip wire mechanism and recommended the purchase of a new mechanism and zip wire.

Councillors Resolved unanimously that the Chair and Clerk could proceed with purchasing the new zip wire mechanism and zip wire.

Action: Clerk

c) Planning & Highways Chair's Report

- Ditchingham Dam Article 4 Direction

The Chair provided an update, advising that the Article 4 Direction, a planning regulation restricting certain permitted development rights to protect the character of the Conservation Area, is being extended from Smith's Garage to include the next three or four properties.

- Street Light's Condition Annual Report

The Street Lights Condition Annual Report has been completed. One street light was found to be leaning and in need of straightening.

Councillors Resolved to accept the quotation of £320 plus VAT for the work.

d) Antisocial Behaviour In Ditchingham – *update*

No report

e) Tree Warden

- Tree Survey Report – *update*

The Clerk has arranged a meeting between Cllr Humphries and a Tree Surgeon to inspect the damaged Oak tree at Thwaite Road Play Area on Thursday 5 March 2026. Report to follow.

10. To Consider Issues Not Decided by Committees

None

11. To Note Any Communication Received

a) SNC/BDC Tobacco & Vapes Businesses Contact Details

The Chair declined to comment on SNC/BDC Tobacco and Vape Business Contact Details, stating that he believed South Norfolk Council or Broadland District Council should contact local businesses directly to enquire about the stock they sell.

b) Invitation to a Reserve Forces Training Evening – Thursday 5th March 2026

The Chair will be attending the Reserve Forces Training Evening and reporting back.

c) Waterside Maltings Amenity Area – *update*

The Chair has repeatedly emailed and attempted to call PK Livesey, the owners of the Maltings amenity land, but progress has been very slow due to a lack of response. The land remains unkept and poorly maintained, causing concern among residents. Two Cllrs, together with a resident of the Maltings, have now formed a small subcommittee to address the matter despite these difficulties.

12. Any Other Business

For discussion and information only; the Council cannot make decisions on these items.

a) Bungay Conservation Volunteers (BCV) visits for 2026 (*confirmed*)

BCV have confirmed three visits in 2026 and provided a list of suggestions for the Community Orchard. Some of these have been approved by the Chair and Clerk. As noted in Finance, Ditchingham Parish Council will be supplying a bench for the Community Orchard.

b) Ditchingham United Charities Member

Councillors Resolved to re-elect Mr Alan Larkin to Ditchingham United Charities.

Action: Clerk

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

13. To Receive items for the Next Agenda

None

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

- Monday 11th May 2026 - 7.30 pm - Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parish Council Meeting
- Monday 13th July 2026 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 14th September 2026 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 9th November 2026 - 7.30 pm

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm

6. a) Finance Reports

Ditchingham Parish Council Finance Report - March 2026

Community Account balance from the last meeting - b/f	£	2,324.94
Transfer from Saver Account	£	8,000.00

Receipts Since Last Report

Date	Ref.	Details	Amount	
13/01/2026	credit	Bierton & Woods - MAG memorial	£	45.00
16/01/2026	credit	Vat Reclaim 01/07/2025-31/12/2025	£	2,385.77
23/02/2026	credit	Rosedale Funeral Home - MAG	£	300.00
			Total	+ £ 2,730.77

Payments Since Last Report

31/01/2026	Fee	Bank Service Charge	£	6.00
09/02/2026	75	SNC ROSPA Play Area Inspections	£	216.00
09/02/2026	76	British Gas - Street Lights Energy	£	169.31
09/02/2026	77	Van Dijk Accountants - Payroll	£	90.00
09/02/2026	78	Excite Solutions Ltd - Grounds Maintenance - January	£	947.48
09/02/2026	79	CM Robinson Roofing Ltd - Lychgate Roof	£	5,078.40
17/11/2025	68	Landmark Fencing Ltd - Hollow Hill Footpath Refund	£	(2,075.40)
January	S/O	Staff Costs	£	1,201.82
23/02/2026	69	Cozens (UK) Ltd - 3-Monthly Maintenance Charge	£	108.00
23/02/2026	70	Excite Solutions Ltd - Grounds Maintenance - February	£	947.48
23/02/2026	71	Clerk's Expenses - December-March	£	186.00
			- £	6,875.09
			Total	£ 6,180.62

Community Account Statement Balance

Uncleared receipts	Total	£	7,122.10
Unpresented payments		£	300.00
	-	£	1,241.48
	Total	£	6,180.62

Saver Accounts

Unity Business Saver Account	£	26,765.62
Redwood Bank Business Saver Account	£	119,513.27
Total Saver Accounts	£	146,278.89

Total Balance in All Accounts

£ 152,459.51

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

Ditchingham Parish Council - Budget Report 2025-26		March 2026				
Year End 2024-25		Budget 2025-26	Actual Year to Date 2025-26	Forecast 2025-26	% of Original Budget	Notes
Receipts						
47,000	Precept	47,000	47,000.00	47,000	100%	
1,840	Cemetery	1,500	3,055.00	3,055	204%	Increased
338	Allotment Rents	308	332.00	332	108%	
4,601	Business Accounts Interest	2,500	3,541.75	3,100	142%	Increased
5,358	VAT Reclaim	5,000	4,068.65	5,000	81%	
59,136	Total Budgeted Receipts	56,308	57,997.40	58,487	103%	
Un-Budgeted Receipts						
-	Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	0	1,069.45	1,069	1069	
600	S106/Grants	0	-	-	-	
400	Youth Shelter Payment	0	-	-	-	
60,136	Total Receipts	56,308	59,066.85	59,556	-	
Budget Variance				3,248		
Expenditure						
14,269	Staff Costs	15,167	12,183.88	15,167	80%	
504	Clerk's Expenses	504	519.00	504	103%	
1,349	General Expenses/Internal Audit/Subs/Bank Charges/Defib/Village Hall/etc.	2,000	1,722.41	2,000	86%	
100	Allotment Rent to Land Owner & Expenses	150	710.00	710	473%	Allotment clearance
1,350	10 x Dog Waste Bin Servicing Charge	1,450	1,390.00	1,390	96%	
866	Insurance - 3 year LTA 2025-2028	950	1,003.76	1,004	106%	Increased
210	Miscellaneous	500	347.50	500	70%	
750	Parishioner Magazine Production Costs	750	-	750	0%	
2,767	Cemetery Maintenance & Grass Cutting - 3-year contract end 2025	2,755	2,171.22	2,755	79%	
2,148	The Dip Maintenance & Grass Cutting - 3-year contract end 2025	2,755	2,261.31	2,755	82%	
1,872	Thwaite Road Play Area Maintenance & Grass Cutting - 3-year contract end 2025	2,755	3,385.40	2,755	123%	Extra work completed
1,907	Village Maintenance & Grass Cutting - 3-year contract end 2025	2,755	2,236.45	2,755	81%	
-	Tree Survey & Maintenance	2,600	1,048.00	2,600	40%	
2,121	Street Lights Energy Annual Contract & Maintenance Contract	3,000	2,006.28	3,000	67%	
1,000	Local Projects Grants - S137	1,000	-	1,000	0%	
5,495	VAT Expenditure (reclaimed)	5,000	4,136.68	5,000	83%	
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	1,998.00	2,000	100%	Deducted from reserves
42,876	Total Budgeted Expenditure	56,591	37,581.88	57,145	66%	
Budget Variance		-283		554		
Un-Budgeted Expenditure						
-	Lychgate Roof Repairs	0	4,232.00	4,232	0%	Deducted from Reserve
-	Community Orchard	0	650.00	650	0%	Deducted from Reserve
-	Community Projects - VE Day Event	0	515.37	515	0%	Received £600 in grants 2024-25
-	Hollow Hill Fence Replacement	0	-	-	0%	Deducted from Reserve
2,412	Village Improvements Reserve	0	-	-	0%	
10,357	Play Area's New Equipment & Repairs	0	-	-	0%	
-	S137/CIL Expenditure	0	1,086.12	1,086	0%	Village Hall
55,645	Total Expenditure	56,591	44,065.37	64,182	-	
4,491	Total Variance	-283		(4,626)		
Community Account Balance b/f						
60,136	Total Receipts per cashbook (less interest)		55,525.10			
55,645	Total Payments per cashbook		44,065.37			
2,721	UTB Community Account Balance		6,180.62			
134,737	UTB & Redwood Bank Saver Accounts (including interest)		146,278.89			
137,458	Total in Both Accounts		152,459.51			
23,508	General Reserves (should be at end of year 50% of precept - £23,500)		47,051.18			
113,950	Restricted Reserves		105,408.33			
137,458			152,459.51			
Restricted and Earmarked Reserves						
-	CIL Infrastructure Levy - Restricted	1,069.45	(1,069.45)	-		Village Hall
11,683	Play Area New Equipment & Repairs Reserve - Earmarked			11,683		
2,000	Community Orchard Grant - Restricted		(650.00)	1,350		
70,107	Street Lights Repairs/LEDs/Removal (74 Street lights) Grant - Restricted		(1,998.00)	68,109		
15,019	Grounds Maintenance Reserve - Earmarked		(1,729.50)	13,289		Hollow Hill Fence
8,148	Lychgate & Cemetery Maintenance Reserve - Earmarked		(4,232.00)	3,916		Lychgate Roof
6,093	Tree Maintenance Reserve - Earmarked			6,093		
-	VE Day Grants - Restricted	600.00	(532.04)	68		
900	Village Improvements Reserve - Earmarked			900		
113,950	Restricted and Earmarked Reserves			105,408		
23,508	General Reserves			47,051		
137,458				152,460		

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

9.b) DPC Community Report – March 2026

Main activity since the last meeting has been around arranging the fete for Sunday June 14th, 11am-3pm. We are hoping to attract people not only from Ditchingham but from the other villages. Also, our aim is to make it attractive for children and for centenarians if there are any local!

Think of a 1950's fete, with children's events, but also games for children that they can do as they and their parents walk round.

We had the list of stall holders last year and these were contacted and in addition Melissa has contacted more, total to date is 26 who have agreed to come.

Around 20 emails have been sent to local businesses asking for prizes, or would they like to have a stall to promote their business, could any of their staff/members be a volunteer on the day. St Johns Ambulance is in place; the toilets have been arranged.

Volunteers are what is needed: re chairs from the village hall, to be collected taken back, to run the children's actual competitive games, egg and spoon, three legged race, etc, 4 in total, to man the little pitches for the as you walk round games e.g. balance the coin on the lemon, how many pegs can you put on the line in 30 seconds, hoopla, tombola, and more as well.

Car parking, general help, etc., needed.

There will be a small number of tables for children to become a stall holder, selling their toys they no longer use, or items they have made, bookmarks, jewellery, cakes, etc.

We thought about a tug of war, and emails will be sent looking for teams in the next week.

Expenses to date are St Johns, we got a reduced rate via Melissa, the toilets, prizes, and other miscellaneous costs that will crop up.

We need insurance, charity status, risk assessment, as we have been asked for so far.

All hands on deck please!

Cllr Gifford

Community Committee Chair

Signed _____

Date _____