

Ditchingham Parish Council

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Ditchingham Village Hall

Monday 18th November 2024 - 7.30 pm

Councillors: Keith Weston (Chair), Brendon Bernard (Vice Chair), Andrew Evans-Hendrick, Angela Gifford, Fred Hartwell, Gill Oliver and Tony Swan

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): Sally Chapman

Also Present: Julie Cole from Ditchingham Estates, Alan Preslee from Beaulay Homes and seventeen members of the public

A. Public Forum – for Members of the Public

- A parishioner reported concerns about dangerous parking on the corner of Thwaite Road near Scudamore Place, which is causing difficulties for large vehicles and farm machinery to pass safely.
- A parishioner expressed thanks to the Parish Council for relocating the dog bin to a more accessible location on Windmill Green.

B. County Councillor, District Councillor and External Reports

County Councillor Barry Stone sent apologies and a report:

<https://ditchingham-pc.gov.uk/category/meetings>

C. Presentation by Beaulay Homes and Ditchingham Estates

Information about a proposal to develop a site bordered by Loddon Road and Tunneys Lane for housing. Alan Preslee from Beaulay Homes and Julie Cole from Ditchingham Estate presented a proposal for a new estate in partnership with Ditchingham Estate. The project is in the pre-planning stage, with no application yet submitted to South Norfolk Council. Key points included plans to retain existing trees and hedges, extend footpaths and the speed limit, and potentially include a new play area. The site is deemed suitable for 25 dwellings, comprising 2, 3, and 4-bedroom houses and bungalows. A planning application is expected next spring, following technical work and supporting surveys.

Public questions raised:

- Concerns about flood risk and destabilisation of the bank behind residents' homes, with drainage engineers addressing these issues.
- Confirmation that the 25 proposed dwellings are in addition to the existing 45 homes proposed elsewhere in the village.
- Feasibility of having only one road in and out, noting that County Council prefers a single exit onto Loddon Road.
- Potential safety risks of the Loddon Road exit due to parking, with plans to extend the footpath, speed limit, and possibly widen the road as requested by Norfolk County Council.
- Lack of pavements on Tunneys Lane for the three exits, with assurances that footpaths will be included.
- No mains drainage—whether existing properties can connect: No details on drainage yet.
- Will the trees be protected, and can a complete line of hedge be planted along with consideration for the SSSI site: This will be advised during the planning process.
- Will the green area have a maintenance company: The green area will be offered to the Parish Council for maintenance; otherwise, a private company will handle it, with residents paying an annual fee.
- Potential light pollution due to the land being higher than Tunneys Lane: This will be investigated.

The Chair thanked Mr. Preslee, Ms. Cole and the parishioners for their input and the information provided.

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

MINUTES

1. To Approve Apologies for Absence

None

2. Declaration of Interests and Consider Requests for Dispensation

None

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Meetings held on 16th September 2024

The Minutes from the Meetings held on 16th September 2024 were confirmed unanimously as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

The Chair expressed thanks to the Clerk for preparing the excellent minutes.

4. Matters Arising

None

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

None

6. Finance

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

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

b) To Note The Clerk's National Association Local Councils (NALC) Pay Award from 1st April 2024

Cllrs noted the Clerk's annual pay award negotiated by NALC.

c) To Approve the Budget and Precept for 2025/26 and Consider the Restricted & Earmarked Reserves

i) Should some be Changed?

ii) Review Amounts

Councillors Approved the Draft Budget (attached page 950) and Agreed to move £15,018.56 from the Ear-Marked Reserves to a Ground Maintenance Reserve for additional maintenance.

d) Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant 2025 Commemoration Fund – Grant

Councillors Agreed to Apply for the £500 Grant to hold a VE Day Event in 2025.

Action: Clerk

e) The Dip's Youth Shelter Sale

The Dip's Youth Shelter was sold through a closed bidding process for £400 and has now been removed.

f) New Rubbish Bins at Ditchingham Dam - update

Two new Rubbish Bins have been purchased for Ditchingham Dam and will be installed soon.

g) Consider Available Grants

None

7. To Receive the Planning Applications & Decisions Report

The Chair read out the 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 (if required)

a) Chair's Report

The Chair gave a verbal update of his report (attached).

b) Community Chair's Report (attached)

- Pride in Place Community Grant - Clean Up & Bloom - update

The Clerk has informed SNC the grant has been spent on two rubbish bins.

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

- Play Area Inspections Reports 2024

The Clerk has analysed the reports for The Dip's and Thwaite Road Play Areas (90 pages) and prepared an action plan. The Clerk will contact the handyman and obtain quotations from contractors to carry out the recommended repairs.

The Chair commended the Clerk for her work in condensing lengthy reports into a concise action plan.

- Thwaite Road Play Area - BMX Track – update

The Chair reported that no responses had been received to his request in the parish magazine regarding whether the BMX track is still used and required. Councillors agreed to install a sign at the BMX track posing the same questions and requesting responses to be sent via text to the Clerk.

Action: Clerk

c) Planning & Highways Chair's Report

The Chair gave a verbal update of his report (*attached*).

9. To Note Correspondence Received

None

10. To Consider Issues Not Decided by Committees

a) Maintenance Contract for Year 3 (2025)

Councillors Resolved to schedule additional cuts for Chicken Roundabout and The Dip's roadside banks in 2025. It was further resolved that the Cemetery will be fully cut every month from March to October in 2025.

The funding for the additional maintenance will be drawn from the ground's maintenance reserve.

b) Village War Memorial– update

Cllr Evans-Hendrick is working on this project independently, as DPC does not have a power to provide a war memorial.

Cllr Evans-Hendrick reported that he has secured all the necessary funding, agreed on the site and plans for the war memorial, and that work will commence shortly.

c) Proposal to Develop a Site Bordered by Loddon Road and Tunneys Lane for Housing

Make a decision on the following proposal from the Chair:

"Having received information, including a site plan, from Ditchingham Estates and Beaully Homes, DPC supports, in principal, (at this pre planning application stage) the development of the site bordered by Loddon Road and Tunneys Lane for housing."

Councillors Resolved unanimously to Support, at this pre-planning application stage, the development of the site bordered by Loddon Road and Tunneys Lane for housing, subject to the flooding concerns being addressed.

d) Consider the Future of "The Parishioner" or Alternatives

Councillors discussed the future of the Parish Magazine and Agreed that they would like to continue it for the benefit of parishioners.

Two parishioners, along with several Councillors, agreed to form a production committee and approach Broome PC and the Village Hall committees to seek their help.

11. Any Other Business

For discussion and information only, the Council may not make decisions on these items.

a) Bus Routes

Cllr Hartwell suggested that, once the new estates are completed, the local bus company should be contacted and asked to consider extend their routes and pickup points.

b) Solar Panels and Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Cllrs were informed that solar panels and electric vehicle charging points are being considered for the Village Hall.

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

12. To Receive items for the Next Agenda

None

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

- Monday 20th January 2025 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 17th March 2025 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 19th May 2025 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 21st July 2025 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 15th September 2025 - 7.30 pm
- Monday 17th November 2025 - 7.30 pm

The meeting ended at 9:28 pm

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

6. a) Finance Report

Ditchingham Parish Council Finance Report - November 2024					
Community Account balance from the last meeting - b/f					£ 2,451.58
Receipts Since the Last Report					
Date	Ref.	Payee	Amount		
18/09/2024	DD	SNC Precept Payment 2/2	£ 23,500.00		
30/09/2024	DD	Allotment Payments - September	£ 168.00		
07/10/2024	credit	VAT Reclaim - 01/07/2024-30/09/2024	£ 738.19		
07/10/2024	Invoice	Rosedale Bungay - Burial HP	£ 300.00		
10/10/2024	DD	Youth Shelter Payment	£ 400.00		
30/10/2024	DD	Allotment Payments - October	£ 140.00		
			Total	+	£ 25,246.19
Payments since the Last Report					
05/09/2024	DD	Tomato Energy - Street Lights 14/06/24-31/07/2024	£ 241.25		
23/09/2024	24	Cheyne Farms Ltd - Allotment Rent	£ 100.00		
23/09/2024	25	Mr R Mulley - Cleaner Equipment	£ 4.99		
23/09/2024	26	Excite Solutions Ltd - Grounds Maintenance August	£ 549.49		
23/09/2024	27	SNC - 10 x Dog Bin Emptying	£ 1,620.00		
30/09/2024	DD	Bank Service Charge	£ 18.00		
02/10/2024	DD	Tomato Energy - Street Lights 01/08/2024-31/08/2024	£ 154.23		
14/10/2024	29	Excite Solutions Ltd - Grounds Maintenance August	£ 549.49		
14/10/2024	30	Clerk's Mobile telephone top-up	£ 20.00		
31/10/2024	DD	Bank Service Charge	£ 5.40		
Sept-October	S/O	Staff Costs	£ 2,266.54		
			Total	-	£ 5,529.39
23/09/2024	Transfer	To Redwood Saver Account - £15,000		-	£ 15,000.00
			Total		£ 7,168.38
Community Account Statement Balance					£ 6,868.38
Uncleared receipts					£ 300.00
Unpresented payments				-	£ -
			Total		£ 7,168.38
Unity Business Saver Account					£76,099.56
Redwood Bank Business Saver Account					£85,259.63
Total Savers Accounts					£ 161,359.19
Total Balance in All Accounts					£ 168,527.57

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

6. b) Budget Report

Ditchingham Parish Council - Budget Report 2024-25		November 2024					
Year End		Budget	Actual	Forecast	% of	Notes	Draft
2023-24		2024-25	Year to Date 2024-25	2024-25	Original Budget		2025-26
Receipts							
40,000.00	Precept	47,000	47,000	47,000	100%		47,000
3,275.00	Cemetery	1,500	1,475	1,500	98%		1,500
322.00	Allotment Rents	308	326	308	106%		308
1,984.68	Business Accounts Saver Interest	1,700	1,793	2,500	105%		2,500
3,765.86	VAT Reclaim	5,000	2,007	5,000	40%		5,000
49,347.54	Total Budgeted Receipts	55,508	52,602	56,308	95%		56,308
51.75	Wayleave Payment	0	0	0	-		0
-	Thwaite Road Play Area Cashbox	0	0	0	-		0
549.56	Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	0	0	0	-		0
1,500.00	S106/Grants	0	0	0	-		0
-	Youth Shelter Payment	0	400	400	0%		0
51,448.85	Total Receipts	55,508	53,002	56,708	-		56,308
	Budget Variance			1,200			
Expenditure							
14,446.81	Staff Costs	14,059	4,952	14,585	35%	Inc. pay award	15,167
504.00	Clerk's Expenses	504	336	504	67%		504
1,893.84	General Expenses/Internal Audit/Subs/Bank Charges/Defib/etc.	2,000	1,268	1,268	63%		2,000
100.00	Allotment Rent to Land Owner	150	100	150	67%		150
1,238.70	10 x Dog Waste Bin Servicing Charge	1,250	1,350	1,350	108%		1,450
849.38	Insurance - 3 year contract 2022-2025	900	873	873	97%		950
200.50	Miscellaneous	500	210	500	42%		500
750.00	Parishioner Magazine & Website Production Costs	750	0	750	0%		750
1,981.61	Cemetery Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,755	801	2,755	29%		2,755
2,194.55	The Dip Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,755	981	2,755	36%		2,755
2,174.56	Thwaite Road Play Area Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,755	801	2,755	29%		2,755
2,413.92	Village Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,755	1,042	2,755	38%		2,755
456.00	Tree Survey & Maintenance	2,600	0	2,600	0%		2,600
2,037.97	Street Lights Energy Annual Contract & Maintenance Contract 2022-2025	3,000	540	3,000	18%	Includes £114 energy refund	3,000
2,720.00	Local Projects Grants - S137	1,000	0	1,000	0%		1,000
4,483.42	VAT Expenditure (to reclaim)	5,000	1,213	5,000	24%		5,000
3,341.25	General Maintenance (Handyman)	5,000	0	5,000	0%		1,000
356.81	Community Projects (Jubilee/Coronation Events)	0	0	0	-		0
5,570.18	Play Area's New Equipment & Repairs	5,500	-75	-75	-1%	Refund Goal Anchors, bought sep	9,500
3,590.00	Street Lights/Columns -Repairs/LEDs/Removal/Replacements	2,000	395	395	20%		2,000
42,143.32	Total Budgeted Expenditure	55,233	14,788	47,920	27%		56,591
9,305.53	Budget Variance			-7,313			
549.56	S137/CIL Expenditure	0	0	0	-		0
910.25	Chicken Roundabout Lectern	0	0	0	-		0
52,763.31	Total Expenditure	55,233	14,788	47,920	-		56,591
(1,314.46)	Total Variance	275		8,788			-283

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

8. a) Chair's Report November 2024

The oak sign on the gate to the Community Orchard became detached. I am grateful to Charlie Taylor who has agreed to replace it.

I attended the brief Remembrance Day ceremony, arranged by Cllr. Hartwell and Richard Mulley, (Thank you) at the village sign. A piper was engaged to play at the occasion. The Clerk and I used our delegated powers to authorise the payment of £150.00. About a dozen parishioners attended.

We have been informed of a Tree Preservation Order on a horse chestnut in Falcon Lane.

I agreed, with our Clerk, to ask the handyman to carry out a risk assessment of the cemetery after the autumn cut has been done.

Keith Weston
15.11.24

8. b) Community Report November 2024

Playing Field – I went down there around 11.00 am on a morning when there had been no rain for several days. The dew was so heavy that my feet became wet through my boots!

The reason being that the grass is too long and as a result I cannot see the playing field being used by parents and children in the coming months unless the grass is cut.

Bakers Lane – the sign post advising that it is Bakers Lane, was mentioned and reported to the SNC in July. To date there is still no road sign at the junction of Tunneys Lane and Drapers Lane.

Bakers Lane has significant grass growing in the middle of the road and as the soil on the road is spread widely, further grass will grow. (I will bring photos this evening).

I reported possible dangerous branches to the Highways Dept. on trees on the edge of the field, on the left of Bakers Lane as you come from Belsey Bridge Rd, to SNC around May time, as yet nothing has been reported back and branches still look a possible danger should they come down.

Angela Gifford DPC

8. c) Planning & Highway's Chair's Report November 2024

Highways

Speed in Hamilton Way – Endeavouring to make progress, following residents' concerns, our Clerk has been in touch with the relevant authorities. The latest is that a 20 mph roundel may be provided (time scale unknown).

The metal barrier at the end of the footpath. Turners Close to Loddon Rd is wheelchair unfriendly. Our clerk has been in touch with NCC, who agreed to replace.

The timber barrier at the end of the footpath Clark Rd to Loddon Rd is damaged beyond repair. When we reported it NCC said they had no plans to replace it. Our clerk has challenged this.

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

Planning

Enforcement orders outstanding – Two addresses in Windmill Green – ongoing for several years.

Cllr. Bernard and I had an informal meeting with Iain Jamie (Beaully Homes) and Julie Cole (Ditchingham Estates agent) re proposed development on land bordered by Loddon Rd and Tunneys Lane. This will be dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

Plans for developing a property in Pound Lane have been refused by SNC. DPC did not recommend it for refusal. The owner has appealed to the Secretary of State.

There is a plan for change of use of a building on the Emmaus site. I am proposing to use my delegated powers (with the clerk) to recommend it for approval.

There is a plan for a rear extension to Wood House, Free Lane. I am proposing to use my delegated powers (with the clerk) to recommend it for approval.

A plan for landscaping of land next to 1 The Loke has been approved with conditions.

Keith Weston
November 2024

Signed _____

Date _____