

Ditchingham Parish Council

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Ditchingham Village Hall

Monday 18th September – 7.30 pm

Councillors: Keith Weston (Chair), Brendon Bernard (Vice Chair), Angela Gifford, Andrew Evans-Hendrick & Georgina Simmonds

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO): Sally Chapman

Also Present: Twelve members of the public

Public Forum – for Members of the Public

Several parishioners attended the meeting to report speeding in Waveney Road and Rider Haggard Way, mainly going to and from the new Hamilton Way development. Cllrs discussed various ideas to reduce speeding including:

- Speed Awareness Machine (SAM2) – the Clerk confirmed she has already received permission to site the SAM2 in this location from Norfolk County Council (NNC)
- Additional signs and speed roundels on the road

External Reports

No reports

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 24th July 2023

The Minutes from the Meetings held on 24th July 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

None

6. Finance

a) External Auditors Report and Certificate 2022/23

The Chair read out the External Report and Certificate 2023 (*as attached*). The Chair and Cllrs thanked the Clerk for her diligence in the Parish Council's affairs.

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

The current bank statement and reports were signed by the Chair. Cllr Bernard asked several questions re the accounts, payments and reserves.

Councillors unanimously resolved to approve the Finance & Budget Report and Receipts & Payments (attached).

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

- c) **To Consider a Dog Waste Bin at the Community Orchard – c/f**
- d) **Allotment Renewals**
The Clerk confirmed she had sent out the allotment payment requests for the next year.
- e) **Poppy Wreath for Remembrance Day – update**
A donation of £20.00 has been made to The Royal British Legion instead of purchasing another wreath, as last year's is still in good condition.
- f) **Community Orchard Gate Sign**
Mr Charlie Taylor has donated an Oak board for the Community Orchard gate sign and arranged the lettering which cost £120.00. Cllrs thanked Mr Taylor for the lovely sign which will be appreciated for many years.
- g) **Play Area & Handyman Repairs – update**
The Clerk advised of the work the handyman has completed recently, including repairing the village sign base and laying slabs around it.
- h) **Wayleave Payments**
The Clerk informed she discovered in the files some old Wayleave agreements for which DPC had not received payment, this is now being claimed.

7. Street Lamps

- a) **Emails re street lamps 5-11 Beevors Gardens**
The Clerk circulated to Cllrs emails regarding the removal of two street lamps in Beevors Gardens.
- b) **To Receive information from the Clerk re possible change to Precept**
The Clerk circulated information on how it would affect the 2024-25 precept if two or four street lamps were replaced and the cost added to the precept.
- c) **Decision replacing Street Lamps (2) in Beevors Gardens and Green Lane**
Cllrs resolved unanimously to replace two street lamps, one in Beevors Gardens and one in Green Lane and to use funds from the Street Light Energy Reserve. Action: Clerk
- d) **To Consider the following Amendment to the Street Lamp Policy**
Cllrs resolved unanimously to adopt the following amendment to the Street Lamp Policy:
1.7 Decisions to decommission lamps will only be made following discussions between the Chair of Planning & Highways, one other Councillor and Clerk. Action: Clerk

8. 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>

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

- a) **Chair's Report**
No further report.
- b) **Community Chair's Report**
The Chair read out her report and answered comments (*attached*).
Cllrs asked the Clerk to ask the grounds contractors to cut the top of Cheyne Walk. Action: Clerk
- c) **Planning & Highways Chair's Report**
 - Hamilton Way Speeding and to Consider Additional SAM2 Locations
As discussed in the public session above.
 - Dangerous Crossing at Pirnhow Street, Ditchingham – c/f
 - Chicken Roundabout Lectern – c/f

10. To Note Correspondence Received

- a) **St. Mary's Ditchingham Parochial Church Council (PCC) email – Churchyard Maintenance**

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

DPC has received a letter from the PCC complaining about the maintenance of the churchyard and requesting a meeting. DPC maintains the grass paths and a yearly clearance. The Clerk has emailed the PCC to ask for a copy of the documentation to prove it is a closed churchyard and a copy of the formal transfer letter served on DPC on its closure, as she cannot find any records of the agreement. Parish Councils do not have any powers to maintain an open churchyard.

11. To Consider Issues Not Decided by Committees

a) Hollow Hill Community Orchard

Cllr Bernard informed the grass and hedges have now been cut and the signs will be put up soon.

b) Parish Partnership Bid Suggestions

None

c) Anti-social behaviour in The Dip

Cllrs discussed and will discuss the cost of having the Youth Shelter moved and an additional light over the skatepark.

Action: Chair/BB/Clerk

d) Green Lane – update

The Chair advised:

- NCC has filled some potholes on Green Lane
- NCC has stated via email they will not put up a fence to divide Green Lane from Broome Heath's entrance
- DPC will replace one street lamp
- The Chair will facilitate a meeting between NCC Highways, Ditchingham Estate, two Green Lane residents and the Clerk in October to discuss any further issues

12. Any Other Business

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

a) Defibrillator

The Clerk informed the Community First Responder has advised the defibrillator is missing from the cabinet and will make enquiries to locate it.

b) Village Sign War Memorial Plaques

Cllr Evans-Hendrick informed he has contacted numerous businesses in Ditchingham to ask if they could support the cost of the plaques to remember the fallen from Ditchingham. He has received some positive responses and will continue to look for support and funding.

13. To Receive items for the Next Agenda

a) Budget & Precept Setting

The Clerk asked Cllrs to advise well before the next meeting if they have any projects for funding to be added into the next budget.

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

- Monday 20th November 2023 at 7.30 pm

The meeting ended at 9.33 pm

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

6. Finance

a) External Auditors Report and Certificate 2022/23

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2022/23

In respect of **NO0128 – Ditchingham Parish Council**

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it does not provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2023; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2022/23

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with *Proper Practices* and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

None.

3 External auditor certificate 2022/23

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

06/08/2023

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23 Form 3
Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*

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Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

6.b) Finance Report

Ditchingham Parish Council Finance Report - September 2023

Community Account balance from the last meeting - b/f £ 15,136.25

Receipts since Last Report

Date	Ref.	Payee	Amount	
17/07/2023	credit	Rosedale - Burial	£ 255.00	
			Total	£ 255.00

Payments since the last Report

18/07/2023	s/o	SSE Street Lighting Energy - June	£ 100.92	
21/07/2023	DD	ICO - Data Protection	£ 35.00	
16/08/2023	s/o	SSE Street Lighting Energy - July	£ 176.78	
07/08/2023	28	Cozens (UK) Ltd - Street Light Maintenance June/July/August	£ 108.00	
07/08/2023	29	Community Action Norfolk - Play Equipment Training	£ 120.00	
07/08/2023	30	CAS Parish Protect Insurance	£ 849.38	
		Staff Salaries July-August	£ 2,210.47	
06/09/2023	31	Men's Shed - woodwork	£ 236.00	
06/09/2023	32	SNC - Dog Bins	£ 1,486.44	
06/09/2023	33	PKF Littlejohn - External Audit	£ 378.00	
06/09/2023	34	Excite Solutions - Grounds Maintenance July	£ 549.49	
06/09/2023	35	Royal British Legion - Donation	£ 20.00	
18/09/2023	s/o	SSE Street Lighting Energy - August	£ 187.67	
		Total		£ 6,458.15
		Total		£ 8,933.10

Community Account Statement Balance

Uncleared receipts		£ 11,833.74
Unpresented payments		£ -
		£ 2,900.64
	Total	£ 8,933.10

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		£ 130,665.24
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Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

6.b) Budget Report

Ditchingham Parish Council - Budget Report 2023-24

May 2023

Year End 2022-23		Budget 2023-24	Actual Year to Date 2023-24	Forecast 2023-24	% of Original Budget	Notes
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%	
-	Wayleave Payment	0	0	0	-	
-	Thwaite Road Play Area Cashbox	0	0	0	-	
15,065	Community Infrastructure Levy	0	550	550	-	
-	SNC - Coronation Grant	0	200	200	-	
2,200	S106 Grants	0	0	0	-	
66,656	Total Income	47,508	23,002	44,525	-	
Expenditure						
12,239	Staff Costs	13,339	5,751	5,751	43%	
396	Clerk's Expenses	504	84	84	17%	
1,610	General Expenses/Internal Audit/Subscriptions/Bank Charges/etc.	2,000	1,550	1,550	78%	
100	Allotment Rent to Land Owner	150	0	0	0%	
1,106	Dog Waste Bin Servicing Charge	1,200	1,239	1,239	103%	
780	Insurance - 3 year contract 2022-2025	780	849	849	109%	
-	Miscellaneous	500	0	0	0%	
750	Parishioner Magazine & Website Production Costs	750	0	0	0%	
1,318	Cemetery Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,000	1,168	1,168	58%	Includes an invoice from 2022/23
1,262	The Dip Maintenance & Grass Cutting	1,700	1,301	1,301	77%	Includes an invoice from 2022/23
2,017	Thwaite Road Play Area Maintenance & Grass Cutting	2,500	1,301	1,301	52%	Includes an invoice from 2022/23
2,677	Village Maintenance & Grass Cutting	3,100	1,459	1,459	47%	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 2022-2025	5,000	1,620	1,620	32%	
16	Local Projects Grants - S137	1,000	2,020	2,020	202%	Deducted reserves £1,000
5,396	VAT Expenditure	5,000	2,097	2,097	42%	
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	23,452	23,452	49%	
29,589	Budget Variance	-615	-1,199	20,324		
-	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	26,618	23,452	-	
12,274	Variance	-2,615	-3,616	21,073		
36,433	Community Account Balance b/f		12,930.25			
65,880	Total Receipts per cashbook (less interest)		22,621.02			
54,382	Total Payments per cashbook		26,618.17			
12,930	Community Account Balance		8,933.10			
121,351	Business Saver Accounts (including interest)		121,732.14			
134,281	Total in Both Accounts		130,665.24			
19,065	General Reserves		19,065.95			
115,216	Restricted Reserves		111,599.29			
134,281			130,665.24			

Signed _____

Date _____

Ditchingham Parish Council

9.b) Community Chair's Report

September 2023

There have been negative and positive comments about The Dip over the last few weeks.

The negative ones around the amount of glass, alcohol cans, etc that are accumulating in the 'Youth Shelter'.

Positive ones have been about the game of football that took place on The Dip, a game where several people both young and old were taking part and enjoying – how the area should be used.

The cemetery is overgrown and access to some of the graves would mean, if early morning dew was about or there had been a shower, would mean wet feet and legs for those coming to change flowers, for example. I will bring photos. About five weeks ago I walked the path on Hollow Hill Rd and nettles and briars were beginning to spring up again. I will take photos this weekend.

Angela Gifford
Community Committee Chair

Signed _____

Date _____