



Iden Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th November 2024 7.30pm, Iden Village Hall.

Notices

The Chair expressed the Parish Council's condolences to the family of Chris Sullivan who had lived in Iden since 2012. His recent funeral highlighted his eventful life. We also lost Neville Payne who with his wife Sheila had managed the Bell Inn and upon his retirement had taken up woodturning with his finished articles being very practical and popular and owned by many Iden residents and visitor

A two minute silence would be held at the War Memorial on Sunday 10th November. Laying of wreaths will start at 10.50am and afterwards tea and coffee would be available in the village hall. Claire Carle and Nick Padgham were thanked for looking after the War Memorial and garden.

The Save the Bell Action Group would be holding another fundraising quiz night on Thursday 7th November in the village hall, 7pm.

Claire Clare had organised a very successful Halloween party for the local children, 10 of whom had attended.

Present

Councillors M. Miller (Chair), P. Allard, B Luckhurst and J. Wood

In attendance: County Councillor Glazier, District Councillor P. Osborne, the Clerk M. Philo.

Members of the Public: Four.

Iden Parish Council holds the General Power of Competence

1. Apologies

District Councillor Hacking and Councillor Say. D Chalet, B Luckhurst and M Chalet.

2. Disclosure of Interests and Dispensations

None.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the 1st October 2024, were unanimously agreed, as a true record.

4. The meeting adjourned at 7.34 pm for Public Session

County Councillor Report

Councillor Glazier advised that he had noted that the kissing gate for Memorial Bungalow footpath was not yet installed. His October meeting with the Highways Steward had been deferred as the Steward had been unwell and he was looking into the works schedule for patching works to the Wittersham end of the main throughfare and the name plate sign for Grove Lane.

As part of the new government autumn budget, East Sussex County Council would receive approximately £1.3 million for roads (potholes). It was expected that the announced increase in employers National Insurance payments, from 1st April 2025, would increase the cost of services they contract out.

District Councillor Report

The actual Government settlement figures are released late November and the District Council had estimated a further saving of £250,000 would have to be found.

Councillor Paul Osborne had attended the last planning committee and spoken against the Land at Conkers application. However, the committee had approved it with 35 conditions. There followed a discussion of the advice given by planning officers and the comments made as councillors voted on the application.

Public Questions

Councillor Miller queried how the two separate enforcements against the Bell Inn now appeared on the District Council website, to have been merged.

A member of the public requested that the hedge for the Bell Inn be cut back.

5. The meeting reconvened 7.42pm

6. Planning

6.1 Enforcements and Appeals

None.

6.2 Planning Decisions made by Rother District Council (since the last meeting) – None.

6.3 Applications considered

RR/2024/1628/L and 1627/P Park Oast: Proposed two storey side infill extension and proposed double garage. Changes to existing fenestration on southern side to improve traditional façade. Internal wall exteriors. **It was resolved by majority to support both applications.**

6.4 For Notification Only: None

7. Finances - Parish Council

7.1 Second Quarter Financial Report

Council balance on 30th September 2024 - £18,840.55. Earmarked reserves total £9,060.36 (reserve of £8,000 and three other ring-fenced sums (Website £661.36; garden society donation £246 and £153 Natural Recovery). The final cost £3,795 of the ashes area creation agreed last year has now been settled. A £500 transfer to the Pavilion Account is also held in the account. The final precept payment of £8,000 has also been received.

Receipts Second Quarter £9,888.37

The second half of the precept £8,000 along with £1,600 from the burial ground £153 from the Rewilding Iden, and bank interest of £29.87. There are also a few pennies in cash back for the charge card -22p and refund of £105.28 from Beckley and Pett PCs for ink.

Payments Second Quarter net of vat £5,891.83

Expenditure in this period has included £2,240 being about half the grass cutting fee for the playing fields, play area, closed All Saints churchyard and the New Burial Ground. The footpath team also replaced some of the main support posts for the chestnut paling fence between the cemetery and parking area of the playing fields and installed a new stand for the brass plaque recording the donation of the land by Mr Mason, costing £47.43. The play area equipment inspection (£78) was completed and no major issues raised. The cemeteries, playing field and play area costs are in line with budget. Under the heading of Other Smaller Assets, the Elmsmead bus shelter repairs and repaint was finally completed - £75.83. This budget has exceeded straight off with insufficient budget being allocated but this may only be exceeded by a few hundred pounds.

Council running costs for the quarter were £3,218.78, including £911.82 for council insurance, £210 for external audit, and £35 data handling fee. At six months these are as expected.

As was stated in the previous quarter report the donations budget has been exceeded.

Overall, the general spending is slightly under 50% of that budgeted. Without an unexpected receipts such as from the Burial Ground any overspend will come from reserves. It should be noted that 'general reserves' held are there to cover the cost of an unexpected serious event. This could be anything from an insurance claim not being covered or a Health and Safety Executive fine. The council is the closest it has been to only holding just this reserve in the last thirteen years.

It should be noted that the parish council budgeted £2,000 more than it requested in council tax to reduce the unallocated funds held but it has also spent a large amount on repairing the pavilion in recent times which have been covered by these unallocated funds.

The pavilion funds have been exhausted for some time and the council is having to use other funds to cover the pavilion running costs.

Councillor Allard requested confirmation of the spending allocated to the Contingency Budget. Clerk would advise after the meeting.

7.2 Budgeting for 2025-2026

A first draft budget was presented by the clerk and it now included a sum towards the running cost of the pavilion since the funds passed over with the demise of Iden Pavilion Association have been exhausted. The Chairman remarked that the Pavilion would need financial support for the foreseeable future as the Pavilion Trust got on its feet and this would probably entail a higher precept noting the village had voted unanimously to save this building.

7.3 October Bank Balances

30th September 2024 £ 18,840.55

Plus total Receipts £ 1,808.60

Less total Payments £ 1,863.64

31st October 2024 £18,785.51

(31st October 2024 statements -Treasurers Account £8,318.21 and Reserve Account £10,467.30)

7.4 October Receipts

£8.60 Bank Interest

£1,800.00 Burial Fees

7.5 October Payments

£10.74 Charge card – Post Office – footpath mailing less 6p cash back

£629.20 Salaries

£41.70 Office costs

£32.00 Rother Association of Local Councils: Annual Subscription

£400.00 Iden Village Hall: Room hire for the ear

£500.00 Refund part burial fee

£250.00 Transfer to Pavilion Account

7.6 The Following Payments were Authorised

£629.20 Clerk's September salary.

£41.70 M Philo: Room £30, car £11.70

£50.00 RBL Poppy Appeal Donation (LGA1972, s,137)

£100.00 B Burdet: honorarium

£35.00 Information Commissioner's Office: Annual Data Handler fee (Direct Debit)

Charge Card (18 October)

£59.99 Microsoft office annual subscription (not taken in October)

£518.40 Wix: next 3 year website host fee

(£250 of £500 transfer to pavilion account is outstanding)

7.7 Lloyds Bank Accounts

Lloyds Bank has advised that as of 14th January 2025, it will be bringing in charges for the club and societies accounts: £4.25 month management fee per account plus charges for every transaction above the 100 transaction a month threshold. Following

discussion, it was resolved to remain with Lloyds Bank as many banks were now charging community accounts and to close the pavilion account as the original funds has been exhausted. The EDF Direct Debit would have to be transferred beforehand.

8. Save the Bell Report

The situation remains unchanged and the group is waiting to hear about the application but any processing has been suspended since the elections.

9. Urban Verge Cuts

Following discussion, it was NOT resolved to continue to pay for additional cuts to urban verges in 2025. And it was resolved to go with option 1 offered, at no cost, by highways of two cuts (spring and autumn).

10. Pavilion - Finances

10.1 October Bank Balances

Bank Balances on 31st October 2024 Treasurers Account £ 333.90 (30th September £255.56)

10.2 October Receipts

£250.00 Transfer from Parish Council

10.3 October Payments

£18.45 EDF monthly direct debit

£3.21 Castle water – total £13.20 less the £9.99 credit

£150.00 RSR Waste Management – Pavilion cesspit bung

10.4 Payments Authorised

£69.60 J S Fire Protection: Annual Extinguisher check

11. Iden Playing Fields and Pavilion

11.1 Iden Pavilion Working Party Update

The Fete Monies have been allocated to all interested parties although not yet paid out because of a bank hiccup with HSBC. MetroBank will not issue a cheque book until Charitable status is achieved. This is being dealt with currently but it is a lengthy process.

Meanwhile Debbie Chalet is also resubmitting the previously unsuccessful grant application to Rother. A further application is being submitted to Little Cheyne Windfarm for replacement windows and main doors.

Leaves are causing a blocking guttering problem at the moment which it is hoped will shortly be resolved.

11.2 Pavilion Fire Extinguisher Check – was completed without issue.

11.3 Pavilion Gutters

The clerk was requested to ask if voluntary caretaker B Burdett could assist with clearing the pavilion gutters.

11.4 Playing field grass

The clerk was requested to instruct the grass cutters to carry out another cut as the grass is long.

12. Risk Assessment

The single Sweet Chestnut branch that had broken and was hanging down on the roadside edge of the playing field has been removed.

The old fencing left in the Churchyard will be removed by a neighbour to be burned shortly.

13. Information for Councillors

The council had reported the fly tipping in the rear of Conkers close to Elmsmead has been reported to Environmental Health

A request to plant a tree in the churchyard had been received.

Residents are looking at the possibility of obtaining listings for mature trees at the Conkers site.

14. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 3rd December 2024, 7.30pm, Iden Village Hall.