



Iden Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd September 2024 7.30pm, Iden Village Hall.

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.

2. Disclosure of Interests and Dispensations

Councillor Wood had a disclosable pecuniary interest regarding the decision on the planning application for his property.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Following minor amendment, the minutes of the 2nd July 2024, were unanimously agreed, as a true record.

4. The meeting adjourned at 7.32 pm for Public Session

County Councillor Report

The county councillor would be inspecting the roads around Iden with the new Highways Steward and had noted that the bottom of Gardiners' Hill had not been jet patched as expected.

Enquiries with the Public Rights of Way team had revealed that following discussions with the landowner of Memorial Bungalow, a pedestrian gate had been delivered to the owner, on the 15th August, for him to install. A member of the public advised that the gate was not in place yet while the footpath way marker post had been reinstated.

District Councillor Report

Rother District Council will shortly be consulting the public on its local plan 2024-2028 for 6 weeks. This used to be known as the corporate plan.

The development in Peasmarch for 41 houses by the same developer as for the Conkers' site in Iden, had been given the go ahead in spite of local protest and the district councillor speaking against the application. Peasmarch has a neighbourhood plan and the decision questions the strength of it in the planning arena.

A resident highlighted the difficulties for the elderly, only being able to acquire or renew a brown garden bin service online and not being able to make payment over the phone.

Public Questions

Residents highlighted that the height of the grass and vegetation on verges and hedges on Playden Lane and Church Lane/Coldharbour Lane has resulted in a dangerous reduction in visibility round the bends. Clerk to report.

Various overgrown hedges by pavements in the village was making it difficult to use the pavement. Clerk to send a letter.

A resident requested that the Grove Lane Bus shelter be tidied and cleaned.

5. The meeting reconvened 7.42pm

6. Planning

6.1 Enforcements and Appeals

No official reports outstanding but officers were looking into some emailed in.

6.2 Planning comments submitted under delegated authority

RR/2024/819/P Park Oast, Wittersham Road: Proposed two storey side extension and proposed double garage. Support - Whilst the Parish Council understands there is a need to restore this grade II building, which it supports, the council understands that subsequent to this application being posted, the Conservation Officer has visited the site and expressed concerns which may result in redrafted plans. As such the council support is on the basis of the present plans acknowledging they may be changed and if so the Parish Council will be consulted.

6.2 Planning Decisions made by Rother District Council (since the last meeting)

- i. RR2024/867/L Bosney Farmhouse, Grove Lane: To insert an oak post under a broken oak beam spanning the large lounge. Granted.
- ii. RR/2024/2024/921/P 2 Gardiners Hill, Wittersham Road: Proposed two storey side extension and single storey rear extension. Extension of loft conversion with installation of roof light. Proposed erection of a home office. Approved conditionally.
- iii. RR/2024/819/P Park Oast, Wittersham Road: Proposed two storey side extension and proposed double garage. Application was withdrawn by the applicant.

6.3 RR/2023/2153/P Conkers, Main Street – update

There has been no official decision but from correspondence on the website there appeared to be discussion on the viability of the site when including reasonable priced (affordable) homes.

6.4 Applications considered: None

6.5 For Notification Only: None

7. The Dissolution of Iden Fete and its Committee

The Fete Committee had disbanded and had passed over the remaining funds to The Pavilion Trust to distribute.

A discussion followed regarding dealing with the container. The Pavilion Group had investigated the contents and believed that almost everything could be thrown away. A group of volunteers could empty it into a skip. Apparently, the container is the back of a lorry.

8. Council Handyman

Mr Burnett has been assisting the council with small repair jobs around the parish on council property. Whilst the council has been covering his costs, Mr Burnett has been volunteering his labour. It was unanimously resolved to offer Mr Burnett the position of council handy man with an honorarium of £100 a year.

9. Local Nature Recovery

The nature recovery group (Wilder Iden) is seeking a new head, in the meantime the funds are being transferred to the parish council towards nature recovery projects in the parish. The Chair will write and thank the Sam Murphy for all her work in the Churchyard and verges.

Rother District Council has been unable to provide any paperwork regarding the finalisation of a tree protection order for a holly tree at the village hall. **It was resolved to plant the native Holly tree, acquired in case a replacement was needed, in the All Saints Churchyard.**

10. Finances - Parish Council

10.1 First Quarter Financial Report

Council balance on 30th June 2024 - £19,931.81.

Earmarked reserves total £8,907.36 (reserve of £8,000 and two other ring-fenced sums (Website £661.36 and garden society donation £246)).

The cost (approx. £2800) of the ashes area creation is an outstanding payment from last year and is also held within the balance above.

A £500 transfer to the Pavilion Account is also held in the account. There will be no further income till September when the final precept payment is received.

Receipts First Quarter £8,733.73

The first half of the precept £8,000 along with £500 from the burial ground, £200 for the season hire of the playing fields by Iden Cricket Club and bank interest of £33.73.

Payments First Quarter net of vat £6,498.39

Expenditure in this period is taken up by the payment of annual fee for services. The additional grass cuts for urban verges only was £595 and £149.50 for emptying the dog waste bin on the playing fields plus subscription to the advisory and training services of East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC) and therein the National Association of Local Councils £ 145.55. Training costs of £383 have exceed the anticipated budget as it has covered some of the cost to the clerk for the CiLCA qualification.

The council's unallocated fund of £1,000 has already been used for the year to cover the cost of the removal of the small cherry tree in the churchyard brought down by a storm. The remaining £200 has used up the general spending budget for the churchyard and cemetery.

Donations of £1,850 has far exceeded the £100 budget allocation with the £1,650 donation to Save the Bell Inn towards the valuation cost of the Bell Inn. As the budget is very tight this and any overspends will be coming from the council reserves.

Council running costs for the quarter were £2,694.89 (including the ESALC subscription and training) are on track at 25% of its budget share.

At this stage it is difficult to predict how the year will affect the council's spending.

Following query, the clerk advised that, all outstanding projects from the previous year had been completed and paid for in August, so the bank balance was a very true picture of the council's finances. At the end of August, the council's funds had dipped to within a few hundred pounds of its emergency funds. Going forward, without any additional separate income to the precept, any expenditure in excess of budgeted sums would reduce the council's emergency reserves. The Chairman congratulated and thanked the Clerk for her diligence in ensuring the council had a clean bill of health.

10.2 Completion of External Audit

PKF Littlejohn certificated it had found no issues for concern and that the council complies with accounting regulations.

10.3 July Bank Balances

30 th June 2024	£ 19,938.81
Plus total Receipts	£ 316.05

Less total Payments	<u>£ 4,375.98</u>
31 st July 2024	£ 15,878.88

(31st July 2024 statements -Treasurers Account £5,439.28 and Reserve Account £10,439.60)

10.4 July Receipts

£10.77 Bank Interest
£200.00 Burial Ground
£105.28 Recharge to Beckley and Pett PCs

10.5 July Payments

£12.99 Webbs of Tenterden: Creosote for Elmsmead bus shelter(vat £2.16)
(£159.34 June Charge card – Parish Assembly (£21.27), Inks (£90.89), Fire blanket (£16.13), stationary (£1.10), Internal Audit gift (£29.95))
£629.20 Salaries
£43.00 Office costs

10.6 August Bank Balances

31st July 2024 £ 15,878.88
Plus total Receipts £ 9,410.33

Less total Payments £ 5,532.73

31st August 2024 £19,756.48

(31st August 2024 statements -Treasurers Account £1,306.55 and Reserve Account £10,449.93)

10.7 August Receipts

£10.33 Bank Interest
£1,400 Burial Ground
£105.28 Recharge ink Pett and Beckley PCs
£8,000 RDC: Precept

10.8 August Payments

£4,554.00Pride Building: creation of ashes area (vat £759)
£629.20 Salaries
£41.70 Office costs
£228.29 Refund A Bauling - village Picnic (vat £11.49)
£56.92 Refund C Gilbert - cemeteries fencing materials and new post for Mason sign (£9.49)
Charge card
£17.99 Halfords - Emergency triangles for ICE (vat £3)
£4.75 Tesco – Ream of papers (vat £79p)
Cash back credit 12p

10.9 The Following Payments were Authorised:

£629.20 Clerk's August salary.
£41.70 M Philo: Room £30, car £11.70
£252.00 PKF Littlejohn LLP – External audit (vat £42)
£93.60 Playsafety Limited: Play equipment annual safety inspection

Charge Card (4 September)

£16.00 Post Office: Envelope and recorded delivery
£3.30 Post Office: Book of First Class Stamps
Cash back credit 10p

(£500 transfer to pavilion account is outstanding)

11. Save the Bell Report

The group was still waiting to hear from central government regarding their application for funding. They had approached the new local MP for assistance and were waiting to hear back. Picnic in the Park (Village Picnic) had raised £1,200 for Save the Bell.

12. Pavilion

12.1 July Bank Balances

Bank Balances on 31st July 2024 Treasurers Account £ 391.33

12.2 July Receipts – none

12.3 July Payments

£115.00 B Burdett Repair of garage door

£18.04 EDF monthly direct debit

Castle water were supplied with a reading that has put the account in credit £32.03 in spite of little water usage and standing charges

12.4 August Bank Balances

Bank Balances on 28th August 2024 Treasurers Account £ 322.61

12.5 August Receipts – none

12.6 August Payments

£68.72 EDF monthly direct debit

Castle water were supplied with a reading that has put the account in credit £32.03 in July Estimated water usage of £11.02 leaving the account in credit of £21.01.

12.7 Payments Authorised

£150.00 RSR Waste Management – Pavilion cesspit empty

13. Iden Playing Fields and Pavilion

13.1 Pavilion Working Party Update

The fete funds received came to £ 5686. Local group had been invited to apply for funding. The group has now written booking forms, terms and conditions of booking and a charging schedule. While the group is organising setting up a website these will be available on the council website. The group's CIO registration was ongoing. In the meantime the group would apply to the Rye Fund and Rye Ancient Run sponsorship just giving page promises had reached £800.

13.2 Pavilion Cesspit

The pit had recently been emptied and the overflow catch pit was also full. The level of the overflow pipe reduced the capacity from approximately 1,000 to 750 litres. It was advised that 100 people at an event will produce 1000 litres of waste. The council may need to empty the pit more frequently. A bung would be fitted to ensure no leakage.

14. Risk Assessment

A request was made for the Grove Lane Bus Shelter to be cleaned and weeded.

15. Information for Councillors

16. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 1st October 2024, 7.30pm, Iden Village Hall.