



Minutes 7th July 2026

Iden Parish Council

Clerk: Dr Rebekah Gilbert

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Minutes of the Iden Parish Council meeting held on 7th July 2026 at 19:30, Iden Village Hall

Present

Parish councillors: Michael Miller, Greg Say, Bet Luckhurst, Jeremy Cooper, Philip Allard.

Rother District Councillors: Paul Osborne

In attendance: Rebekah Gilbert, parish clerk. Four members of the public.

The meeting commenced at 19:30 and closed at 20:25

1. Apologies

There were no apologies received from Cllr Hacking nor Cllr Bradley.

2. Disclosures of interest

Cllr Cooper has a personal but not pecuniary interest with the The Bell public house (7a).

Cllr Say has an interest in building work for the pavilion as a director of WS Wrights (8h).

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2nd June 2026 were approved and signed by the chairman as a true record; this being the first suitable date for signature.

Matters of note from the previous meeting:

5d. The AGAR has been sent to the external auditors P K Littlejohn and we await their reply.

5n. A new laptop was purchased for the clerk @ £603 + VAT.

5o. The council's insurance was renewed for this year.

7b. The pavilion cesspit has been emptied.

4. Adjournment of the meeting

The meeting was adjourned for a period for notices and question time.

4A Notices from the chairman

- Cllr Miller asked the clerk to send the council's best wishes to Mr Morris Metcalf, who has been very ill. Morris was a regular member of the public at our meetings and is being missed.
- Cllr Miller advised those present of the "picnic in the park" on 26th July from 12 noon in memory of Anne Bauling and fundraiser.
- Cllr Miller informed the meeting that Cllr Allard had decided to retire from the council, and that this was his last meeting. The chairman wished him well, thanked him for his six years of service to Iden, and that he would be missed. The clerk will notify RDC tomorrow about the vacancy, which can hopefully be filled in time for the September meeting.
- Cllr Miller wished everyone a happy summer break.

4B Report from County Councillor

Cllr Bradley was not present and did not submit any written report.

4C Report from District Councillor

- Cllr Osborne attended the Scrutiny Committee meeting last night, which updated Rother members on their planning enforcement policy. A working/ task and finish group has been set up to look at it, and RALC will discuss it tomorrow. Parish clerks, on behalf of their council, may be asked to comment on it. There is now a full complement of enforcement officers at RDC.

4D Public question time

- Members of the public were still struggling to make comments on Rother's planning portal. The clerk will put guidance notes on the parish website, and advised that written submissions could be made to Cllr Osbourne, or to the Clerk, both of whom would pass them on to RDC planning.
- Mr George introduced himself as a new resident of Iden who is an emergency service worker. He is looking to drone-map the area so that all blue light services have the same data to work with. It is very early days, and he is aware of sensitive matters relating to privacy and indemnity. He was made aware of ICE.

5. Parish Council Finances

5A To receive and approve the schedule of payments and income for June 2026

A spreadsheet was presented to members, and signed by Cllrs Miller and Say.

5B To receive and note the budget monitor for the period April-June 2026

- A spreadsheet was presented to members. Payments by Iden Parish Council total £6141.98 against the bank statement for the period April-June 2026. Against the budget monitor spending is higher – this is due to the clerk not being paid yet, and the tree surgery cheque not being cashed yet. Excluding the emergency spends on the pavilion, this makes the first quarter's spend on track for just a little over 25% of the year's budget.
- Administration is in line with budget.
- There are no costs this quarter for the churchyard, the play area (although an inspection is pending), elections, small projects, nor other asset maintenance.
- Spend on the playing fields is on tree surgery (the cheque for which has not yet been cashed), plus the annual dog bin collection fee.
- Costs for the pavilion are over budget due to the emergency repairs in the spring, however, some of this is reimbursed with insurance monies.
- Donations are over budget, and members may like to consider what sum they wish to put aside for this in the 2027-28 budget.

5C To receive and note the accounts balance as at 30th June 2026

- The community account statement at 30th June is £22,656.57. This includes £10,896.45 from Ecclesiastical insurance for emergency repairs to the pavilion

5D To receive and note earmarked reserves balances as at 30th June 2026

- The Commercial instant access account statement at 30th June is £10,595.75

Members unanimously agreed the parish finances.

6. Planning

6A Comments on planning applications received

Members were asked for comments by 10/07/26 on RR/2025/1772/LDE, a certificate of lawfulness for the existing use of both The Old Dairy and The Stables to use class C3 (dwelling houses), at Thornsedale Oast Wittersham Road, Iden, Rye, East Sussex, TN31 7XA.

There have been on-going issues here for over two decades. Iden Parish Council has recently alerted Rother's Environmental Health department to investigate the whole site.

Members voted unanimously to notify RDC that they refuse the certificate on the following grounds:

- Planning is only a part of a much bigger issue here.
- Members were uncertain if all the dwellings on this site had planning permission.
- There are large piles of rubbish on site which are a health and fire hazard to those living on the site. Furthermore, they could contain hazardous material and cause environmental pollution (which is also a concern to neighbouring landowners).
- The general state of the site was unfair on neighbouring properties.
- There is a chain over a public footpath

6B Enforcements

There were no enforcements or appeals to discuss.

6C Planning decisions

The decision by RDC on the removal of affordable housing on the Conkers site was mentioned during public question.

7. Matters

7A Meeting with Iden Parish councillors and trustees of the Iden Pavilion Trust

A meeting took place on 30th June regarding maintenance of the property. All trustees decided to resign. Cllr Miller thanked Mrs Chalet for all she had done for the pavilion and hoped that she would continue to be involved with fundraising for the pavilion. A formal response will be sent to trustees shortly.

7B Insurance cover for the pavilion

Members unanimously voted in favour to add hirer's cover to IPC's existing insurance, for the additional sum of £80. Whilst all users should have public liability insurance to hire the pavilion or field, this would mean that small parties, eg families, who have no insurance, could hire the facility for a one-off, small event. Every such request to be considered on its merits if this concession is to be permitted.

7C To amendment to the Financial Regulations

It was noted that Lloyds on-line banking does not have the facility for dual-authorisation payments, as recommended in the council's financial regulations. To pay invoices, the clerk makes 'single-click' payments with on-line banking.

It was unanimously agreed by members to permit this to continue, on sums up to £1,000. All payments and banking would be scrutinised by all members ever month with bank statements and spreadsheets containing bank reconciliations, budget monitors, and payments in the daily cash book. The Clerk has now received a charge card.

7D Iden business plan.

The clerk advised that East Sussex Association of Local Councils recommended that parish councils have a business plan. This would aid councils in how they deliver services and look after assets in the parish.

Members agreed that the clerk could research and prepare a short plan for the new civic cycle from May 2027-2031.

7E Local government reorganisation – RALC meeting

Cllr Miller would join tomorrow's meeting remotely. Paper's were circulated to members, who noted that we are only a small parish considering the high level talks that are taking place in Westminster at present. Cllr Osborne advised that CEOs and their deputies of the three Sussex Councils would become part of the Mayoral cabinet following elections next year. East Sussex council would have 100 elected members, as district councils were being abolished.

7E A policy regarding unauthorised occupation of the playing field

Members asked the clerk to bring a draft policy paper to the September meeting that outlined how to proceed should the field be occupied without authorisation.

7G Repair to the playing field car park fencing

It was agreed to spend up to £400 on the replacement of posts, and the repairs to be made as soon as possible.

7H Rebuilding of the pavilion's shower room

Members received estimates from Tolletts and W S Wrights for the water damage in the pavilion. Repairs would be 'like for like'.

Cllr Say declared an interest and did not comment or vote on the matter.

Cllr Allard proposed and Cllr Luckhurst seconded that WS Wrights undertake the work, and this was agreed by members.

7I To agree the use of the playing field by Rye Voluntary Action on Friday 10th July

It was agreed, subject to their production of Public Liability Insurance and their booking form, that this booking would be honoured. Mrs Chalet has offered to assist in the set-up, which the chairman thanked her for.

7J Website and email providers

The clerk advised that the website needed to be updated to comply with the AGAR, which would be done over the summer.

Members experienced difficulties with the current email set up and asked the clerk to explore another provider (Microsoft) and advise the council on the cost.

7K Clerk's pension

Members unanimously agreed to formalise the employment of the clerk following her three-month probation period. As a result of this, she would explore the eligibility and options for a pension.

7I Fire safety review for the pavilion

Insurance cover requests an annual fire safety inspection. The pavilion received its safety review this year and the clerk will enquire with the insurers whether this is sufficient.

Cllr Say will advise the clerk on PAT testing, which is due later this year.

8. Updates

8A The Bell public house

Cllr Cooper stated that there was a shareholders meeting on 25th June, to which the public were invited. They have commissioned architects to draw up plans, and are approaching builders for quotes. They are investigating grant funding. Cllr Miller said the village appreciates all they are doing. There are interested parties to run the pub, but finances have to be raised first. The first AGM for shareholders is on 10th September.

8B Motor cross

RDC's Environmental health department has visited the motor-cross site and served a Community Protection Warning, the requirements of which are:

- Limited to 8 days racing per year. Mr Ramus states he will only hold 5 events per annum.
- Races should be no longer than 6 hours on any day between 09:00-17:00. Mr Ramus is content with this, but if there is an accident, events may run over to ensure proper safety protocols are followed.
- No races on bank holiday weekends.
- Events are at least 4 weeks apart.
- Notify the parish council and neighbours within 250m of the track at least 8 weeks in advance.
- Where the track is used by single riders (not events) that at least 7 days' notice is given to the council and neighbours.

Mr Ramus states that from next year he will make races more formalised and keep neighbours and the council informed. He wants to work with the village and thanked the council. There are two more races this year.

Mr Ramus is working with enforcement officers on bike decibel noise, so as to be compliant with regulations.

Cllr Miller acknowledged that no one wants to stop the racing as it brings enjoyment, and thanked Mr Ramus for his reasonableness and for working with officers.

8C Rye Bay Football Club

Cllr Say and the clerk met with members of RBFC to listen to their requirements for youth matches on Saturday between September and May. They need an extra pitch due to expansion and planning matters at Rye Rugby Club field, and capacity issues at Rye Leisure Centre, where they are currently. They have a good working relationship with Icklesham Parish Council where they also play in Winchelsea Beach. Their members reside between Ashford and Bexhill, so Iden is a good location. Recognising that areas of the field and car park flood over winter, Members agreed that, subject to terms and conditions to be agreed that, in principle RBFC could use the field and pavilion to see how it goes.

8D Play Area update

The play area was due its annual inspection in June, but ROSPA should be coming in July. The clerk checks the area regularly. There are a few defects that need attention, but these can all be repaired after the formal inspection.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 1st September 2026, 7.30pm, Iden Village Hall.

If any meetings are required in the intervening period, proper notice will be given.