



# *Iden Parish Council*

## **Minutes of the Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 7.30pm, Iden Village Hall.**

### **Present**

Councillors M. Miller (Chair), G. Say and B. Luckhurst.

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

Members of the Public: Four.

### Notices

The chairman sent the council's sympathies to the family of Rod Stuart on his recent passing. Rod had contributed to the community, raising funds for the village writing the Millennium Book chronicling village life and publishing calendars and postcards. Rod also organised daffodil planting around the village.

Iden Parish Council holds the General Power of Competence

### **1. Apologies**

District Councillor Hacking and Parish Councillors Allard and Wood.

### **2. Disclosure of Interests and Dispensations**

None.

### **3. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was unanimously resolved to agree the minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024 as a true record.

### **The meeting adjourned at 7.34 pm for Public Session**

#### **County Councillor Glazier Report**

The highways steward had reviewed the potholes in Grove Lane and requested some patching works to be scheduled.

The scrutiny committee would be reviewing the criteria for pothole repairs but Councillor Glazier highlighted that whatever levels were set these would have to be affordable.

Councillor Glazier highlighted that it was important for residents to report potholes as

rural road inspection is monthly. Equally, important is to report any repairs that had not lasted. Temporary filling, made when the weather condition prevent permanent repair, are marked with a 'T'.

A member of the public again highlighted how road closure signs did not provide enough information. Iden appeared to be closed due to the road closure just over the county boundary in Wittersham.

### **District Councillors Paul Osborne Report**

The Local Plan public consultation will open for 12 weeks on the 12<sup>th</sup> April. Although this document does not refer to specific sites, it does suggest housing growth of a further 16 dwellings in addition to the current 12 allocated to the land off Elmsmead (behind Conkers). Notably, Iden's sustainability is considered 'poor' according to Rother's criteria.

In two years, the district council will have to comply with central government requirement for kerbside food waste collection and widen materials accepted (flimsy plastic) under the current recycling collection. To do so the district is looking into buying land at Sidley for a new yard. They will also have to buy new waste collection vehicles and provide containers to residents (approximately 750,000).

A councillor noted that the new brown bin charges had not been well received.

In response to query, it was advised that Rother District Council is working with Southern Water and Environmental Agency regarding untreated sewage discharges into waterways and the sea, particularly at Winchelsea Beach. Surface water entering the sewage system overloads it.

### **Public Questions**

A member of the public asked if there was any news on the empty affordable houses but there was no response yet. The clerk had chased since the last meeting.

## **The meeting reconvened 7.40pm**

### **4. Planning**

#### **4.1 Enforcements and Appeals**

No appeals outstanding and no further enforcement advice since the last meeting.

#### **4.2 Planning Decisions made by Rother District Council (since the last meeting)**

- i. RR/2024/174/P and RR/2024/175/L Partridge, Main Street: New side extension, demolition of existing extension and internal works. Both withdrawn by the applicant.
- ii. RR/2024/172/P Moat Farm Oast: Proposed conversion of part of garage building including new dormer to create self-contained annex for family. Approved.
- iii. RR/2024/201P Tyson March Farm: Removal of Condition 2 relating to agricultural occupancy on RR/76/0087. Refused

#### **4.3 Applications Considered**

None.

#### **4.4 Report on Planning Training**

Cllr Luckhurst had attended and reported - The Future Shape of the Planning System

Present situation: current Government aim for 300,000 new homes to be built nationally (50/50 Council and Private) and for them to be 'more beautiful' (meaning not specified) and to have infrastructure built more cheaply and quickly. (Gove, Levelling Up, Oct 23). Present Government is concerned with overall numbers and councils have little choice but to follow guidance. Apparently, the Government cannot at present tell us how many UK homes were built in the last 2 years in the UK outside England.

Historically, councils have missed targets year on year and Local Plans take too long to produce. Until 2025 we must rely on 2014 projections. Soon we must be more attentive to climate change, respond to net zero targets, respect biodiversity and use new sources of sustainable energy. The catchword mnemonic is BIDEN (Beauty/Infrastructure/ Democracy/ Environment/ Neighbourhoods of quality).

New plans must pay regard to Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) in that they protect existing natural resources and restore and reconnect important habitats. Changes in Permitted Development Rights appear to be given 'en-bloc' by Government: larger extensions may be allowed; buildings may be repurposed more, and brownfield sites may be allowed 'gentle densification'. Two storeys may be allowed on flats and bungalows – sometimes without the need for permissions and this may well be at odds with planning control at a local level as such complexities create uncertainties and the need for enforcement cases.

What's Coming Next? (After the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act of October 2023)

There seem to be major changes ahead providing there is no change of Government.

- Councils are not expected to go beyond Government rules. Standardisation is sought as it is easier to manage. Who will be in charge?? Energy efficiency needs to be well-reasoned and robustly costed therefore.
- There will be mandatory focus on net gain in biodiversity
- Government can intervene in issues of energy efficiency in new housing
- There will be new National Development Policies, with the wording produced by HMG (to save you time!). Everyone will have to use them, same policies everywhere – rural and urban – which means Government has the power to change policies ad hoc.
- Planning will become more digital as the present PC version is the same as the paperwork version, not simplified
- CIL and most Section 106 funding to be replaced with new (already a negative response from development professionals and local authorities)
- Only minor changes to Enforcement and Compliance (10 year rule, no longer any 4 year ones)

What Can local urban and parish councils do?

Time to get Local Plans up to date or start making a new one if more than 5 years old. Perhaps produce a Neighbourhood Priorities Statement as an alternative which will be less onerous and more wide-ranging. For smaller communities this could be more useful although it will not have the same status. It should describe what the Parish hopes to do and is not allowed to have the effect of

preventing development (housing). It is prudent to pursue a plan which is for the next 3 or 4 years only, to be diligent and therefore, less able to be challenged.

Important to remember, a new Government could change all this!

## **5. Council Finances**

### **5.1 Bank Balances**

Bank Balances:

29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 £20,044.90

Plus total Receipts £ 11.46

Less total Payments £ 2,096.50

31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 £18,159.86

(31<sup>st</sup> March statements -Treasurers Account £7,764.76 and Reserve Account £10,395.10)

### **5.2 March Receipts**

£11.46 Bank Interest

### **5.3 March Additional Payments**

None.

### **5.4 The Following Payments were Authorised:**

£551.20 Clerk's March salary.

£41.70 Clerk's salary allowances: Room £30 and car £11.70

£48.00 ESALC: training 'Future Shape of Planning (vat £8)

Charge Card (8 April)

£4.29 The Range: ream of paper

## **6. Footpath 20**

**It was resolved to apply for the track to Thornsedale Oast to the end of footpath 20 to become a public footpath.**

## **7. Pavilion Finances**

### **7.1 Bank Balance**

Bank Balances on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 Treasurers Account £514.74

### **7.2 March Receipts**

Nil

### **7.3 Additional March Payments**

Castle Water estimated readings for water usage for the month, being a debit of £107.17. This is an overestimate as the facility is not in use at present. Taking into consideration of the £3.13 credit £105.04 was taken.

EDF debited £51.76 plus £23.39 for the brief period gap between EDF changing its billing system. Total being £75.15.

### **7.4 Payments to note if Direct Debit is known**

Not known.

### **8. Iden Playing Fields and Pavilion**

The Pavilion working party would update at the parish meeting.

### **8. Risk Assessment**

Nothing to report.

### **9. Information for Councillors**

Rother Voluntary Action was not able to attend the Parish Meeting.

Planning Officers had asked to attend a council meeting to speak about the local plan out for public consultation. Clerk was instructed to invite them to the May meeting.

### **10. Date of Next Meeting**

Ordinary meeting Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024, 7.30pm Iden Village Hall. This would be the annual meeting of the parish council.