



Iden Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd September 2025 7.33pm, Iden Village Hall.

Notices

The Chair welcomed everyone back after the summer recess.

Debbie Chalet and her team were thanked for the wonderful village Fayre at the end of July. The Fayre was blessed with fine weather, many visitors, lots of dogs and importantly children. The tremendous financial outcome will go a long way to making improvements to the Pavilion and its facilities that residents all voted for over two years ago.

On a sadder note, the Chair reported that John Hazelden who was on the council a few years ago has died. John and his wife Madeline lived at Cliff Cottage for many years before moving to Yorkshire. The council particularly valued John's help, expertise and support dealing with some difficult issues at the time. Gardeners in the village were also grateful that John kept a couple of llamas in his field who kindly kept us well supplied with manure especially for our dahlias.

The clerk was asked to write to Madeline expressing the council's sadness at John's passing.

The village has also lost Colette Ortnier who with her husband Charles had lived in Randolphs for at least 30 years. Her funeral is at Iden Church on Thursday 11 September at 11am.

In the nine weeks since the last meeting, the potholes are still here and worsening at the Peace and Plenty end and unfortunately at the stretch by the river.

The village has also been plagued by what seems to be endless closures of the B2082 to Tenterden with road closed signage again indicating that Iden is shut off. Iden stores is especially concerned that these signs are often confusing and can have a detrimental effect upon its trade.

Nevertheless, Iden continues to be a wonderful place to live and we are grateful to everyone who contributes in so many ways to village life.

The hall committee continue to hold its regular and well attended luncheons and the Pop

In and the Bowls Club make for four coffee mornings a month.

The council would like to thank the footpath team who all worked extraordinarily hard in very dry conditions to replace the post on the double gate to the Playing Fields in time for the Village Fayre.

The Chair referred to developments regarding the Bell Inn and a pending planning application for it and advised that the council will discuss the matter when a formal application is considered by the council, which will probably be at the October meeting.

Finally, the chair was able to congratulate, in person, County Councillor Glazier on being awarded an OBE.

Present

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

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

Members of the Public: Nine.

Iden Parish Council holds the General Power of Competence.

1. Apologies

District Councillor Hacking.

2. Disclosure of Interests and Dispensations

None.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Following minor amendment, the minutes of the 1st July 2025 were unanimously agreed, as a true record.

4. Co-option

The Chair invited the candidate Jeremy Cooper to introduce himself. Jeremy and his wife Claire had move to Iden three years ago from Tenterden.

4.1 It was NOT resolved to hold a paper vote

4.2 It was unanimously resolved to co-opt Jeremy Cooper.

The Acceptance of Office was signed and Councillor Cooper joined the members at the council table.

5. The meeting adjourned at 7.45 pm for Public Session

County Councillor Report

Residents were requested to keep reporting potholes and Councillor Glazier had noted that scheduled pothole repair works had not been completed within the set time period. Balfour Beatty had changed some of the contractors it was using for road repairs to improve the service level.

County Council had started the budget process. Adult social care cost will continue to put pressure on balancing a budget.

The deadline for submitting plans for unitary authorities to central government is the

26th September. There is some discussion regarding the inclusion of 5 villages in the Brighton Unitary Authority needed to bring the numbers of electors covered by it, up to the government required level. The savings expected to be made by the re-organisation is through joint working and streamlining systems.

The recent spate of flying of St. George's flag and the painting of it on Highways furniture which have had to be removed, has been at some cost to the public purse. Plans for Parish Councils under Local Government Reorganisation which originally indicated, by the 16 December 2024 government announcement, parish councils would take on a greater role, has been altered by the August 2025 government statement, suggesting parish councils will remain as is but will participate on a neighbourhood forum advising the unitary authority. The structure of these forums would be decided by the unitary authority. Central government had concerns about parish councils taking on a greater role because parish councils are not capped (no restriction on the increase of their share of council tax) and the low numbers of parish councillors being elected (contested).

District Councillor Report

With the summer recess, things had been quiet. Councillor Osborne was struggling to see the benefits of Local Government Reorganisation.

A councillor highlighted that planning applications were falling behind. There is a national shortage of planning officers.

A resident asked Councillor Osborne to call in the application for change of use on the Bell Inn because it was too important to the village to leave to an officer's decision. Planning reasons to object would be provided.

Public Questions

A resident referred to the open letter to residents from the Bell Inn owners about negotiations regarding selling the pub. This, has been displayed outside the Bell. The installation of the parcel delivery boxes outside Iden Stores had received mixed comments but was appreciated by some residents, although this may require a planning consent in due course.

6. The meeting reconvened 8pm

7. Council Emails and Domain Name

The clerk had just attended a seminar with the government office that issues the .gov.uk domain names. Once acquired a website can be redirected to the new domain name. There are government approved providers for parish councils to use to acquire the .gov.uk domain for emails and websites but some only offer the domain name as part of a new website. Some providers also offer a self-administration option across all the emails and assistance to upload or upload emails (at a cost) from the previous email provider. The requirement for parish councils to own their domain name and control emails is part of the increasing requirements to improve security of data and provide the public with certainty of who they are dealing with.

8. Planning

8.1 Applications Responded to under Delegation

- a) **RR/2025/1071/P and RR/2025/1072/L Elms Garage Cottage**, Grove Lane: Internal removal and reconfiguration of modern partitions at ground and first floor of cottage (including removal of chimney). Internal reconfiguration of first floor of garage to provide a home office/storage. External works to cottage to provide French doors to south elevation and door changed to window. External works to garage to provide new glazing to south elevation and replacement of timber shingles with weather boarding. Refurbishment of stone steps and replacement of timber balustrade/handrail to external staircase to garage with metal balustrade and handrail. **Under delegation Iden Parish Council were supportive and considered the improvements/renovations are sympathetic to the local vernacular and care taken to use appropriate materials in their plans, such as lime mortar and fenestration that is not too dominant. Concern expressed about the wooden shingles cladding the western elevation as the architects consider them to be 'modern' and 'largely inconsistent' with the building historically and at odds with 'an external language of timber cladding'. (p.19 of TH's report on 'Historical Significance') and want to install those found on the other elevations. Further information required regarding how they are established as modern as they have been used in E Sussex for hundreds of years (possibly since 1050) as an alternative to brickwork as they were an excellent source of insulation and made of local larch mostly, but also cedar or fir. Incidentally, they also have a low carbon footprint and are said to absorb carbon dioxide. Some of the info provided by TaylorHare Architects contains errors and contradictions. The most ridiculous is that 'Iden is 2.8 miles south of Rye (firmly in the sea!) and that the cottage and garage both 'hug the southern boundary adjacent to Grove Lane' (p.7 Site Local Context)' and 'They lie close to but set back from the Grove Lane (sic), which resides along the southern boundary to the site.' (p.11, Site Location'). Additionally, hope that this will refurbish this property back to its original status with a few minor amendments.**
- b) **RR/2025/1272/P Cliff Cottage**, Military Road: Placement of a shepherd's hut in the garden for use as holidays lets. **Under delegated authority Iden Parish Council would support the application if it falls within planning policy. removed.** This is not showing on the website though an email confirming comment submission has been received.
- c) **RR/2025/1191/L Iden Post Office**, Main Street: Removal of modern existing porch. **Under delegated authority the Clerk submitted a comment that most councillors are members of Iden Stores Association Committee, but it was assumed that most residents would be happy to see the porch removed.** This is not showing on the website though an email confirming comment submission has been received.
- d) **RR/2025/1028/P AND RR/2025/1029/L Park Oast**, Wittersham Road: Proposed two storey infill extension. Changes to fenestration undecided on southern side to improve traditional façade. Internal wall alterations. **Support**

8.2 Enforcements and Appeals

ENF/222/25/IDE Post Office Stores: Installation of in post Parcel Drop Off & Collection Point to the exterior building. Planning permission may be required as the building is listed. Since the notice of complaint, it is understood the installation is being removed.

The Clerk was asked to again email enforcement officers about the over-looking tree house in Randolph Lane as the property concerned is being advertised on airbnb.

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

RR/2025/1191/L Iden Post Office, Main Street: Removal of modern existing porch. Granted.

8.4 Applications Considered – None

8.5 For notification only - none

8.6 Delisting of the Bell Inn

Waiting to hear from Historic England.

9. Finances

9.1 Noted July Bank Reconciliation

30th June 2025 £ 19,460.84

Plus total Receipts 706.06

Less total Payments £ 1,745.05

31st July 2025 £ 18,421.85

(31st July 2025 statements -Treasurers Account £7,881.97 and Reserve Account £10,539.88)

July Receipts

£6.06 Bank Interest

£700.00 Iden Cricket Club Season fees

July Payments

£750.82 Salaries plus omitted NI payments.

£41.70 M Philo: Room £30, car £11.70.

£144.89 ESALC/NALC annual subscription.

£555.00 Refund B Burdet: supplies for repairs to Bus Shelter, pavilion gutter, pavilion veranda floor baton, pavilion loo roll holders, two fingerpost

£189.80 Rother District Council: Annual Dog bin empty fee

£23.71 Castle Water: Pavilion water

£34.88 EDF: Pavilion electricity

£4.25 Lloyds' Account Management Charge

Charge Card (July): Nil

9.2 Noted August Bank Reconciliation

31st July 2025 £ 18,421.85

Plus total Receipts 11,006.67

Less total Payments £ 1,318.76

31st August 2025 £ 28,109.76

(31st August 2025 statements -Treasurers Account £17,563.21 and Reserve Account £10,546.55)

August Receipts

£6.67 Bank Interest

£2,000 Burial Ground fees (burial and memorial)

£9,000 Council tax receipt (precept)

August Payments

£681.76 Salaries.

£41.70 M Philo: Room £30, car £11.70..

£42.00 Geoxphere Limited : Parish Online mapping (vat £7)

£96.00 Playsafety Ltd: annual play area safety inspection (vat£16)

£252.00 PKF Littlejohn LLP: Annual external Audit (vat £ 42)

£150.00 RSR Drains: Pavilion Cesspit Empty

£18.14 Castle Water: Pavilion water

£32.94 EDF: Pavilion electricity (vat £1.57)

£4.25 Lloyds' Account Management Charge

Charge Card (Aug): Nil

9.3 Payments to Authorise

£400.00 Iden Village Hall: room hire and donation.

£684.76 Salaries.

£41.70 M Philo: Room £30, car £11.70

£4.75 Lloyds Bank: Account maintenance monthly fee & charge to cash chq

£50.00 Refund R Bauling: gate post and postcrete (vat £7.38)

Charge Card (May) Nil

Pavilion Electricity and Water unknown

9.4 Conclusion of External Audit

The external auditor PKF Littlejohn has completed the limited assurance audit and has found no issues of concern. The council has a clean audit with no comments.

10. Payroll Provider

Managing the payroll in house has become more complicated with the reduction of the threshold for employers to pay national insurance to include the parish council.

It was unanimously resolved, in principle, to contract a payroll provider to manage the payroll and submissions to HMRC, etc from the 1st April 2026. Est. cost is £10 a month plus vat for up to three members of staff.

11. Iden Playing Fields and Pavilion

11.1 Iden Pavilion Trust Update

With the sale of some items from the Fayre, the profit from the Fayre had risen to £6,100. There are still items to be sold and the remainder will be going to charity shops.

The legacy received from Geoffrey Chater Robinson towards the fabric of the building has acquired longer term items: new fridge, posts and banners.

As a result of bank issues opening the Trust Account, the Trust had received £400 in compensation from Metro Bank.

The outcome of all the fund-raising activities, is that the trust funds stand about £9,470.

There will be a fuller update will be provided on Wednesday 6th September at 6pm at the village hall.

The Ancient Rye Run will again be passing through Iden on Sunday 14th September and the Pavilion Trust would welcome anybody to help with the water station at the Old Hall that morning.

Councillor Osborne advised that the RDC Community Fund deadline for applications had been extended till the end of October.

The Cricket Club have now finished their season.

11.2 Footpath Gate by Stream Cottage

Public Rights of Way have confirmed that they will provide a new metal gate. Whilst the team is unable to install the gate under the auspices of the PROW, they are covered by the council insurance as volunteers. The clerk is waiting to hear from the team.

11.3 Pavilion Cesspit

As the cesspit can be seen to be almost full and with the difficulty of a vehicle attending in the winter, **it was unanimously resolved to book the pavilion cesspit to be emptied.** £150.

11.4 Gate Post to Double Gate on to the Avenue

The footpath team advised that they would be able to replace the gate post. Under delegated authority this offer to work as volunteers for the parish council was accepted and the council insurance covered the work.

12. New Burial Ground

A resident attending the burial ground had asked if a seat could be provided in the main part of the burial ground as the one in the ashes area did not allow a view of the main area. The only practical location would be the sloping area between the main area and ashes area. The clerk was asked to speak to the Footpath team about providing a simple bench seat.

13. Temporary Road Safety Signs

Following some discussion, it was resolved to be responsible for the installation and the relocation of Temporary Road Safety posters.

14. Draft Equality and Diversity Policy

Councillors discussed the draft model policy provided by NALC and suggested amendments. The amended draft will be presented at the next meeting for approval.

15. Risk Assessment

During the holidays, two people had been seen practicing driving on the playing fields. Golf is prohibited under the original playing field bye laws set by the parish council. The clerk will look into whether these still stand following the introduction of Public Space Protection Orders.

Since the play area inspection in mid-July, which raised no high risks of concern, the soft surface under the junior swings has some shrinkage which will be monitored regularly.

16. Local Government Reorganisation

This was dealt with within the report by the County Councillor.

17. Rubbish Bin for Readers Lane

The Clerk was requested to ascertain from RDC, who run roadside bins, if a litter bin could be installed and collected at Readers Corner. The council would be able to provide a bin.

18. Information for Councillors

The Government had now agreed the pay scales hourly rates for council employees that apply from 1st April 2025 and the council would need to adjust salaries accordingly. Parish councillors are a voluntary role.

19. Date of Next Meeting

Meeting of the Parish Council – Tuesday 7th October 2025, 7.30pm, Iden Village Hall.

20. Pursuant to section 1) 2 of the Public Bodies Admission to meetings) Act 1960 to agree that, because of the confidential nature of business transacted the Public and Press leave the meeting during the consideration of Handy Man 1972 LGA sch.12A, part 1, 5

Following discussion and the residents wish to be considered a contractor, it was resolved that the position has lapsed and the council thanked them for their outstanding work.