



Iden Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th October 2025 7.30pm, Iden Village Hall.

Notices

Recent notification received stated that the request to delist the Bell Inn had been refused and that the listing description had been updated.

Present

Councillors M. Miller (Chair), J. Cooper, B. Luckhurst and G. Say
In attendance: District Councillor P. Osborne, and the Clerk M Philo.
Members of the Public: Seven.

Iden Parish Council holds the General Power of Competence.

1. Apologies

Parish Councillor P. Allard: County Councillor K. Glazier and District Councillor L. Hacking.

2. Disclosure of Interests and Dispensations

Councillor Cooper had a prejudicial interest in the planning applications relating to The Bell Inn, being a member of the Save the Bell Inn a Community Benefit Society.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Following minor amendment, the minutes of the 2nd September 2025 were unanimously agreed, as a true record.

4. The meeting adjourned at 7.35 pm for Public Session

District Councillor Report

Rother District Council had recently voted to support the One Sussex submission to central government, based on 3 unitaries: East Sussex, Brighton and Hove and West Sussex. However, Wealden had at the last minute suggested 5 unitaries which

Brighton and Hove supported. Even though the idea had not been consulted on this option has also been submitted. Central Government is expected to respond in January 2026.

Public Questions 7.40pm

A resident asked if the council will call in The Bell Inn applications.

5. The meeting reconvened 7.41pm

6. Planning (brought forward)

6.1 Enforcements and Appeals

There were no new enforcements. The tree house on Randolph's Lane is outstanding. The In Post parcel delivery collection and drop-off lockers had been removed and the landlords would be included in any planning application to install this facility in the future.

6.2 Planning Decisions by Rother District Council

a) RR/2025/608/L and RR/2025/607/P Bosney Farm, Grove Lane: Alteration and restoration works, including insertion of new windows into existing openings and rebuilding of external stairs. Both approved with conditions.

b) 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. Both approved with conditions.

c) 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. Both refused. It was noted that this is the third refusal whilst building works continue. There was also some confusion as information provided within the application, referred to an oast house in a different parish.

d) RR/2025/1272/P Cliff Cottage, Military Road: Placement of a shepherd's hut in the garden for use as holidays lets. Approved with conditions.

6.3 Applications Considered

a) RR/2025/1411/P Bell Inn, Main Street: Change of use from Public House to dwelling house

b) RR/2025/1497/L Bell Inn, Main Street: Removal of bar (servery) to create open plan kitchen area

c) RR/2025/1504/L Bell Inn: Removal of free-standing signpost

Applications a – c regarding the Bell Inn were considered together. It was resolved by a majority to object (Councillor Cooper abstained) to all three applications for the following reasons:

- The Rother District Council Plan 2014 States at paragraph RA1 as follows:

‘The needs of local villages will be addressed by ensuring thriving and viable rural communities, by retention of, and support for, local shops, services and public houses in villages.’

The Bell at Iden falls clearly in the category of community facilities referred to in the local plan and also at paragraph

‘6.2 of the draft local plan 2020 to 2024. Change of use would have a significant negative effect on available local community facilities.’

- Change of use would conflict with local planning policies and other Rother District Council material planning considerations as set out in the submission to the Planning Committee by the Bell at Iden Community Benefit Society.
- Change of use would have a negative impact on Heritage and Character considerations both for the building and for the village more generally.
- There is a strong and genuine demand in the local community for the Bell to continue as a pub. Well over a hundred written objections to change of use have been made by residents in Iden and beyond, and what is considered to be a fair and reasonable offer has been made for the purchase of the Bell both by the community and by private buyers.
- The Bell is considered by the Save The Bell Group to be financially viable as a pub into the future.
- There is a lack of alternative replacement facilities in the area should the Bell no longer function as a pub.
- The Bell is well placed to avoid joining the ranks of failing pubs and the local community has in its view a viable strategy in place to reverse its decline.
- The applications for delisting the Bell and its sign have now been refused which confirms its heritage status.
- The applications are considered to be premature as negotiations to purchase the Bell are continuing

6.4 For notification only

RR/2025/1560/0 The Granary, Oxenbridge Farm: Certificate of lawfulness for existing use of a building as single dwelling house.

6.5 Delisting of the Bell Inn

Recent notification received stated that the request to delist the Bell Inn had been refused and that the listing description had been updated. It may be a few days before the details are update on Heritage England website.

7. Finances

7.1 Noted September Bank Reconciliation

31 st August 2025	£ 28,109.76
Plus total Receipts	5.84
Less total Payments	<u>£ 1,235.78</u>
30 th September 2025	£ 26,879.82

(30th September 2025 statements -Treasurers Account £16,327.43 and Reserve Account £10,552.39)

September Receipts

£5.84 Bank Interest

September Payments

£681.76 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)
£400 Village Hall: Annual room hire and donation
£15.25 Castle Water: Pavilion Water
£42.32 EDF: Pavilion Electricity.

7.2 Payments to Authorised

£681.76 Salaries.
£41.70 M Philo: Room £30, car £11.70
£4.25 Lloyds Bank: Account maintenance monthly fee
£4,032 Gibbs & Son: Grass cutting (vat £672)
Charge Card (23 October)
£84.99 Microsoft Office: Annual charge
Pavilion Electricity and Water unknown.
£31.98 GoDaddy: iden.uk domain 2 year renewal - outstanding

8. Letter from Iden Community Emergency Forum (ICE)

ICE had written to the council requesting support from the parish council via a council representative. Councillor Miller offered to attend their meetings. It was unanimously agreed to take up his offer.

9. Poppy Appeal and Remembrance Sunday

It was unanimously resolved to donate £50 including a wreath. On Sunday 9th November there will be an act of Remembrance at 10.50am at the War Memorial followed by tea and coffee in the village hall.

10. Iden Playing Fields and Pavilion

10.1 Iden Pavilion Trust

It was unanimously resolved to donate the profits of the Summer Fayre to Iden Pavilion Trust as the Trust is better placed to be able to use the funds as match funding for grants to make improvements to the Pavilion.

10.2 Footpath Gate by Stream Cottage

Public Rights of Way Joy Team had advised they would be installing the new gate on the 15th October.

11. New Burial Ground

Since the last meeting the resident who had requested a bench for the burial ground had acquired it and had offered to donate to the parish council. In the circumstances, it was resolved to accept the offer of the bench on the condition that the parish council would not be responsible for maintaining it nor its replacement when the bench was considered unsafe. Clerk to write to the donator. A copy of the donation policy to be circulated to councillors.

12. Council Policies

12.1 Equality and Diversity Policy

It was unanimously resolved to agree the Equality and Diversity Policy.

12.2 Data Audit and Draft Document Retention and Disposal Policy

Councillors reviewed the information provided. It was suggested that some of the files should be deposited at The Keep in Lewis.

13. Risk Assessment

The metal gate for the play area had sheered off. The broken gate needed to be secured safely as it is too heavy to move far. The clerk had already obtained two quotes as the council had been considering adding an additional gate to the play area. It was suggested that it might be useful to provide a set of double gates to allow for easier access to the area for contractors to cut the grass.

14. Rubbish Bin for Readers Lane

Rother District Council had advised that it had no capacity to take on any further roadside bin collections.

15. Information for Councillors

Highways is holding a stakeholder event this month in Flimwell. Details would be forwarded to councillors.

16. Council Emails and Domain Name

Following some discussion, it was unanimously resolved to agree the proposal to use Parish Online to set up and host new emails. A discount of £100 was being offered for the first year. The final cost would depend on how much storage space would be needed to upload previous emails into the new ones. It was estimated to be about £260 for the first year. It was not expected to be as simple a process as advertised.

17. Date of Next Meeting

Meeting of the Parish Council – Tuesday 4th November 2025, 7.30pm, Iden Village Hall.

18. Pursuant to section 1) 2 of the Public Bodies Admission to meetings) Act 1960 it was unanimously resolved that, because of the confidential nature of business transacted the Public and Press leave the meeting during the consideration of

Clerk's scale point hourly rate

1972 LGA sch.12A, part 1, 5

It was unanimously resolved to confirm the new hourly rate to be back dated to the 1st April 2025. It was also noted that an underpayment to the clerk would also be corrected back to the 1st April 2025.