

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 22nd May 2023 in the Village Hall, Isfield

1. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Welcome

The Chairman, Geoff Sambrook, welcomed the Parish Councillors, District Councillor Christina Coleman and the twelve members of the public who were in attendance. His report was as follows;

'After the previous years of the Covid pandemic, the year just finished has been back to a more normal environment. There were two royal occasions during the year, one of great sorrow; and one of celebration a couple of weeks ago, when the village celebrated the Coronation of HM King Charles III with a street party, which by all accounts was highly successful.

Over the winter, and subsequently, some disturbing planning issues have reared their heads. There is the proposal for which a plan has been submitted to Wealden District Council - for the expansion of the Ashdown Business Park, there is the scheme being put forward for multiple hundred houses at Horstedpond Farm and there is the threat – which is not yet a concrete proposal – to build 2-2500 houses on Owlsbury Farm. The Parish Council has understood our parishioners objections to all of these, and we have made clear our opposition to this scale of development to Wealden District Council. We shall continue to oppose such inappropriate schemes.

The Council's finances remain robust; we have made a small increase in the precept for this coming year, mainly as a protective measure to hedge ourselves as far as possible against the effects of inflation in the cost of the services we undertake.

During the year, we were finally able to get the resurfacing and improvements to the recreation ground car park completed, giving us a great improvement in that facility.

I should like to record my thanks to my fellow councillors for their efforts and hard work through the year to ensure that the things within our control have continued to run smoothly and efficiently. We were sorry to lose Miles Sigley-Brown to the greater temptation of the Calvados region of Normandy; Miles was a valued and constructive member of the council. We were very pleased to welcome Andy Brooks as a Councillor during the year.

As ever, the biggest vote of thanks for me goes to Alison, for all her work, knowledge and assistance. Things would rapidly grind to a halt without her.

3. Reports from County Councillor

There was no report from the County Councillor on this occasion.

4. Report from the District Councillor

District Councillor Coleman reported that following the District Elections earlier this month, the political make up of Wealden Council has changed to a collaboration between the Liberal Democrats and Green Party.

The 4th May elections saw 13 Liberal Democrats elected alongside 11 Green Party members, 10 Independents, nine Conservatives and two Labour councillors.

Although no party had an overall majority, the Liberal Democrats' win of 13 seats make them the

largest party on the council and with the Greens' 11 Councillors, discussions have taken place and led to an agreement to form a decision making Cabinet committee – consisting of four Liberal Democrat Councillors and three Green Party Councillors.

The new leader of the council is Liberal Democrat Councillor James Partridge and the deputy leader is Green Party Councillor Rachel Millward.

The leadership will rotate annually between the two group leaders.

In answer to Councillor's questions she also confirmed;

- i. A decision on the Ashdown Business Park is not expected until September.
- ii. The size of the Cabinet has not changed.

5. Reports from Clubs and Associations in the Parish

- i. AFC Uckfield Colts – There was no report from the Football Club.
- ii. Isfield Cricket Club – The Cricket Club was unable to attend but sent the following report;

'New year, new season and some changes at the cricket club. Jack Fingerneissl takes on the mantle of first team captain, ably assisted by Ewan Thornicroft as Vice-Captain, Andy Robinson becomes the second team captain, with Giles Baker as Vice-Captain. Steve Newham is our new Chairman and Lee Atkinson,-- Club Captain. The club is very grateful to outgoing 1st and 2nd team captains Huw Williams and Neil Thornicroft, who led their teams to promotion last season. Congratulations to them and to both teams for a fantastic season. A special mention should be made for James Fellows, who won the bowling award for the whole of Division 5 East in the Sussex league. Many thanks to David Williams for his expert and dedicated work on the cricket square. We are very lucky to have such a fine pitch to play on and this is thanks to David.

This coming season sees the 1st XI playing in Division Four East of the Sussex league and the 2nd XI in Division 11 East (North). We will also be playing in the Sussex league's T20 competition the 'Slam' and in friendly matches on a Sunday. You can follow the progress of both teams via the Sussex League website and the club's own website: <https://isfield.play-cricket.com/>

Match results and scorecards are uploaded the day after a game and the league positions are updated by Monday morning. We are also on Instagram here: @isfield_cc

However, the best way of supporting the club would be to come to the recreation ground and watch us play. We would be delighted to see you on Saturday afternoons between 1 pm and 7 pm. T20 games will be played midweek from 6 pm.

The club is delighted to welcome new ECB qualified coach Matt Rippengal from Hailsham, fresh from a season playing club cricket in Sydney. Matt will be holding coaching sessions on Wednesday evenings from 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm at the recreation ground – all welcome.

New players are very welcome at Isfield. If you would like to try out cricket or get back into the game there is no better way than at your local club.

Please do get in touch and we can get you started, give you a game of cricket, or coaching session in the nets.

Contact me or Andy Robinson - 07876 498028 andrewrobinson79@gmail.com.

- iii. Isfield Stoolball Club – There was no report from the Stoolball Club on this occasion.
- iv. ICE – Councillor Brooks explained that the Isfield Community Enterprise (ICE) was set up ten years ago because the land at the rear of the pub, which was being used for public events, was for up for sale and residents wanted it to remain for the use of the community.

63 shareholders each bought a share for £1000 and they now manage the field and make sure the site is not developed or over exploited and remains a community resource.

The Shareholders are now looking to set up a General Meeting to elect a new committee and all members are being asked to give their contact details to Councillor Brooks.

6. Open Forum

Ms Pointing asked the Parish Council to support a memorial at the White Bridge to Jim the Fish. This was discussed in more detail at the Annual General Meeting.

Residents also asked the Parish Council to;

- i. Support them by putting pressure on the County Council to get more potholes repaired in the Parish and re-establish the width of the pavements at Northfield Cottages.
- ii. Consider using S106 and CIL to provide a fitness track around the edge of the recreation ground. This was discussed in more detail at the Annual General Meeting.

There were no questions in the Open Forum and the meeting closed at 7.20pm