

Minutes of the Isfield Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 22nd January 2024
at Isfield Village Hall.

64. Present

Cllrs G Sambrook (Chairman), A Keys, S Cramond, T Mitchell-Cobb and P Roundell.

District Councillor C Coleman, Alison Stevens (Clerk) and three members of the public were also present.

65. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor R Galley.

66. Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 6th December 2023

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 6th December 2023 were read, confirmed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

67. Clerk's Report on Matters Arising not covered elsewhere on this agenda

All matters arising were included elsewhere on the agenda.

68. Disclosures of Interest

Councillor Roundell declared an interest in minute 70 because he is a member of SABRE.

The meeting was then suspended.

69. Report from the County Councillor, Roy Galley

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

70. Report from District Councillor, Christina Coleman

District Councillor Coleman said the Owlsbury Farm site and the Ashdown Business Park extension have not been included in new Wealden Local Plan housing allocation but they might have to be added later if the figures are contested.

Other sites were discussed and Knights Farm was suggested as an alternative to the Ashdown Business Park.

District Councillor Coleman confirmed a new SHELAA will be needed and she also stressed the importance of gathering as much evidence as possible because it will help support Wealden.

Councillor Roundell said he is a member of two Action Groups - SABRE and SABRE Owlsbury – and he has found it impossible to find out how or if the Owlsbury Development is progressing. He also thanked the District Councillor who has been fighting hard to oppose both developments.

A formal consultation on the Plan is expected to begin mid-March and it will last for eight weeks. Councillor Coleman agreed to distribute a more detailed timetable for the Plan to the councillors via the Parish Clerk.

On a separate subject, Councillor Sambrook asked District Councillor Coleman to clarify why she

felt unable to refer the planning application for Oak Tree Cottage to Planning Committee North for a Decision and he asked if there was any more the Parish Council could have done to help. District Councillor Coleman explained that ultimately Wealden's Policy is in favour of rural tourism and that played a key part in the decision but ultimately there were not enough material planning considerations. Conditions have been imposed instead as a compromise.

71. Questions from Members of the Public

There were no questions from any members of the public.

The meeting was then re-opened.

72. Reports – to include:

i: Safety Report

- Flashing Signs – Councillor Brooks has resigned since the last meeting and had been unable to ask residents in Station Road if they would like 30mph flashing speed signs via the village newsletter before he did so.
- Councillors resolved to accept a price from Holland and Johnstone of £570 plus VAT to supply power to the new defibrillator at the Village Hall.

ii: Planning Report - There were no planning applications for commenting on at this meeting.

iii: Working Group Against Over Development Meeting (WGOD) – WGod has organised the next meeting of its members. The meeting, which is taking place on the 31st January at Horam Village Hall, will update Parish, Town and District Councillors on the Wealden Local Plan and give District Councillors the opportunity to address any concerns. It will also recommend the most effective way to respond to the consultation.

iv: Recreation Ground and Pavilion Report

- Repairs to the Pavilion – Councillors resolved to accept the price from MBS to update the electrics at the Pavilion and asked for the work to be carried out the same time the new defibrillator is fitted there.
- Exercise Track – Isfield Parish Council has now received two quotes for the new exercise track. Councillor Cramond will look at examples of each contractors' work and report back to the next meeting.
- Councillor Cramond provided the following update on EV Charging Points.

'Believ propose 4 bays sited on the north side of the pavilion car park

- 2 rapid charge points (7-22kW)
- 2 fast charge points (50kW)

Believ would be responsible for installation, operation and maintenance

- They would collect the revenues and pay for the power with no involvement from the PC

- Charge rates would be at their current tariffs and would vary according to market conditions

- Currently 56p (7kWh) and 66p (50kWh)

The PC would sign a 20 year lease and a contract with Terms and Conditions.

Installation would involve connecting the charge points to the nearest suitable grid place

- 200m north of the parking
- In the car park we would require the bays we are installing our infrastructure in to be coned off ready for our civils team to barrier off and set up site
- For the connection works, to the LV main 200m north of the site, we would

require a lane closure which would need 2-way temporary traffic lights, whilst we excavate in the verge along the roadside, and lay our ducting, sand, and electrical warning tape.

This would be carried out in sections, and we would reinstate as we work our way up.

- This would be dependent on permits being granted for the lane closure which could take up to 8 weeks + 3 weeks to carry out the civil works, would mean around 11 weeks once contract is signed
- The EV charging points should be commissioned around 1 week after the civil works are complete

Pro's

- Facility in the village where none exists at present
- Revenue for the PC
- Fulfilling local needs (this facility has been requested)

Disadvantages

- Potentially 4 less parking spaces (need to check on exclusivity)
- Vandalism (need to check on insurance and remedial work)
- Disruption during installation
- Assistance

Next steps

- Review the lease proposal & T&Cs
- Consider seeking alternative bids (KerbConnect have not responded)
- Share Believ proposal with councillors.

In answer to councillors' questions he will now find out:

- What connectors the charge points will have and if they will be tethered or untethered.
- Who is responsible for insuring them.
- What assistance there is if they go wrong and whose responsibility it is for maintaining that area of the car park.
- More details of Believ's network so the Parish Council can seek references.
- Whether or not the parking spaces with chargers can be used by other cars when the chargers are not in use.

He also confirmed:

- The charge points will work via an App.
- Whilst electric cars are understood to be 25% heavier than their counterparts they are still lighter than some other vehicles so he wouldn't expect there to be any damage to the tarmac.

- v: Village Hall Report – Mr Levett, Chairman of Isfield Village Hall asked the Parish Council to consider taking out a £160,000 Public Works Board loan so that the trustees can extend the Village Hall because they need the Parish Council's financial support to secure any grants. They, in turn, will cover the costs of updating the electrics, plumbing and boiler.

Councillors agreed that whilst they would have concerns about borrowing the whole amount if the Village Hall would like to put together a business plan they would be prepared to look at possible ways forward.

Councillor Roundell suggested the trustees might like to consider extending the hall by 50% because Wealden is currently supportive of such extensions.

In the meantime the Clerk will find out if there is a limit to how much the Parish Council can borrow and if the auditors have any advice.

73. Finance Report

Councillors;

- i. Resolved to approve the following payments :

		£
101686	Simon Smith - Hedgecutting	209.00
101687	Clean Corner - Pavilion Cleaning	240.00
101688	A Stevens - Salary - November	769.23
101689	A Stevens - Salary - December	556.02
101690	A Stevens - Expenses	32.40
101691	ESCC - Pension	382.12
101692	M Fellows – Maintenance	119.79
101693	Isfield Village Hall - Hall Hire	26.00

- ii. To approve the cash book and bank reconciliation to 22nd December 2023.

74. Landline Telephone Charges

The Parish Council understands that BT plan to have all landline telephones operating via Wifi, and that analogue phones will be redundant by 2025. At the last meeting it was resolved that the Clerk will write to the County Councillor and ask what ESCC is doing to ensure residents are not left without any emergency contact. She has yet to receive a reply and will chase him up.

75. Co-option of Councillors

Councillors discussed ways to recruit new Councillors and resolved that:

- i. Councillor Sambrook will advertise the current vacancies in his column in the Parish Newsletter.
- ii. Councillor Keys will send a notice out on Facebook.
- iii. The Clerk will arrange for an advertisement to be included on the Parish Council's website.

76. Questions from Parish Councillors

There were no further questions and the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

