



Doc No: 252605

Council meeting – 21st January 2026

Minutes of the Council meeting of Isfield Parish Council as above, held at Isfield Village Hall, TN22 5XG at 19:30.

Present: Cllr G Sambrook (GS) (Chair), Cllr P Roundell (PR) , Cllr A Keys (AK) (Vice Chair), and Cllr Mitchell-Cobb (TM-C)

Absent: Cllr Galley (ESCC) and Cllr S Crammond (SC)

In attendance: A Emery Clerk and RFO; Cllr Coleman (WDC) and 0 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence

To **RECEIVE** any apologies.

- Cllr R Galley (ESCC) tendered his apologies. Cllr SC tendered his apologies and reason for absence accepted.

2. Declarations of interest/Request for dispensations

To **RECEIVE** any declarations of interest. To **RESOLVE** to grant dispensations where appropriate.

- None

3. Public Participation

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting. Any member of the public, who so wishes, may speak at this point of the meeting on items within the remit of the Council. No previous notice need be given. The Council are happy to receive comments but responses will be made outside meetings should they be necessary. Time limit to speak with the discretion of the Chair.

- Nothing to report

4. District and County Councillors' reports

Cllr Coleman (WDC) Report

Local Plan consultation

In December 2024, the government increased Wealden's housing targets by 257 homes a year (from 1,200 to 1,457) and changed the way in which the impact of new homes on roads and transport has to be assessed by the planning system. This has necessitated changes to the draft Plan that was consulted on in 2024, and we are obliged to hold a fresh consultation on the changes.

The new draft of the relevant chapters of the Plan will be voted on by the whole Council and, if it's passed, consultation will begin on 2nd February. Exhibitions are planned to take place in Uckfield on Saturday 14th February and in Maresfield on Tuesday 24th February – you'll be able to find full details on our website. Please take part – your responses are read and considered and the very local knowledge you can bring to the process can be particularly helpful to councillors.

Water Outages

At the time of writing, there are significant water outages, low pressure supplies and intermittent water supply across the East Grinstead, Forest Row, Frant, Nutley, Danehill and Chelwood Gate areas. It is extremely concerning that South East Water is failing to secure this most essential resource. OFWAT has been investigating South East Water's supply resilience since November 2023, after repeated failures. This recent outage comes on the back of South East Water's incompetence at the Pembury treatment works, at the end of last year, where the wrong chemicals were added to drinking water. That resulted in 24,000 homes being without water for two weeks and residents were advised to boil their water before use. South East Water blames the weather, leaks and more people working from home.

Ownership, pay and investment choices lie at the heart of the problem. South East Water is a private company, majority owned by Canadian and Australian pension funds. It pays out more in dividends and interest than it does on infrastructure, pipes and treatment plants. The company's own leakage page reveals a huge gap: its target was to cut leaks 15% by 2025, but instead leaks climbed 7% above baseline.

The fact that Wealden is a severely water stressed region is just one of the reasons why having a government-imposed housing target of building 1,457 new houses in Wealden each and every year is unrealistic, unsustainable and unacceptable.

Local Government Reorganisation.

The Secretary of State, Steve Reed is determined to press ahead with plans to reorganise local government in Sussex, despite widespread unpopularity. In July, Wealden received feedback from its consultation of residents on proposals for Local Government Reorganisation. 5,654 residents across East Sussex participated in the initial survey. The key themes highlighted were: concerns over loss of local representation; the potential negative impact on services; fears over the potential of higher taxes and funding shortages. Having listened to residents through this consultation and discussed the matter at length, including in a Scrutiny and Performance meeting, Wealden concluded that it could not support any of the current local government reorganisation proposals. The Brighton and Hove model, which proposes five unitary authorities, was the least worst option. The alternative, "One East Sussex" model, which proposes three larger and more remote local authorities was not supported. Ultimately, this will be a ministerial decision.

Mayoral Elections

The Mayoral election for the Sussex Strategic Mayoral Authority was initially due to take place on 7th May of this year. In December, the government announced that it would be delayed to May 2028. The justification was that Local Government Reorganisation needs to be fully implemented before the new Mayor takes their place. Many think it would have made more sense to have a Mayor in position ahead of the Local Government Reorganisation, in order to steer that process, as originally proposed. Particularly because an interim chief executive has already been appointed, Mark Rogers. It is my understanding that East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove have requested that the Mayoral elections take place in May 2027.

0% increase in Council Tax

Reform UK is facing criticism after several councils it controls proposed council tax rises close to the legal maximum, despite election pledges to cut or freeze bills. Kent County Council is proposing a 3.99% increase. Leicestershire and Lincolnshire are proposing a rise of 5%. I am pleased to inform you that the Green/Lib Dem Alliance at Wealden District Council voted on a 0% increase in council tax. This was in acknowledgement of the cost of living crisis, that is impacting all of our residents, and made possible because Wealden's finances are in sound financial health.

Food waste collections

Biffa will start collecting food waste from our homes on 30th March. The distribution of food waste bins should have started by the time you read this – if not, they'll be arriving soon. This change is the result of national legislation, and the Council supports it, as it will reduce the amount of waste going to landfill or being incinerated. Both those methods of waste disposal cause pollution, whereas the collected food waste will be turned into soil conditioner that will be usable by farmers, gardeners and anyone else concerned with improving the quality of soil without using harmful substances.

- **Cllr Gallery (ESCC)** – submitted a report and duly noted and is published on the website.

5. Full Council meeting minutes: 26th November 2025

To **RESOLVE** that the minutes of the meeting as above having been previously circulated, be taken as read and approved.

- Cllr GS was absent from the meeting. Unanimously resolved by remaining members – Cllr AK signed to that effect.

6. Matters arising from previous minutes

- Nothing to report.

7. Clerks Report

- Report distributed prior to the meeting to all members and published.

8. Correspondence

To note/discuss correspondence received.

- Duly noted

9. Planning Applications to discuss and also any further applications that arise after publication of the agenda.

WD/2025/2852/F

DAVEM, STATION ROAD, ISFIELD, TN22 5XG

PROPOSED DORMER EXTENSION

Decision: No comment

KPS Composting Site, Isfield Road, Isfield, East Sussex, TN22 5JJ

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2015 - Variation of condition 2 of planning permission WD/835/CM

To extend the permitted operating hours to allow for weekend and bank holiday working.

Decision: No comment

- **To RATIFY the following applications**

WD/2025/2642/P02

NEW HOUSE FARM, BUCKHAM HILL, ISFIELD, TN22 5XU CHANGE OF USE TO CLASS B8 (STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION).

PD Change of use from Agricultural to Flexible Uses

Decision:

“Isfield Parish Council objects to this re-application for the following reasons:

The site lies outside the designated development boundary, and as such, any proposals must adhere to the requirements of Policies DC7 and BS14, which emphasise that development should be compatible with the character of its rural setting.

Access to the buildings is via a private road that runs in very close proximity to existing residential properties.

This application gives rise to significant noise, disturbance, and artificial lighting throughout the day and night, adversely affecting neighbouring residents.

This is a reapplication which does not satisfactorily respond to the rejection of the original application.”

- **Duly ratified**
- **To note the following WDC decisions**

Application No. WD/2025/2349/LB/WD/2025/2349 USE OF EXISTING COMMERCIAL BUSINESS AND SERVICE PREMISES TO FORM A VETERINARY CENTRE (REMAINING IN CLASS E/COMMERCIAL BUSINESS AND SERVICES) TO INCLUDE FOR EXTERNAL POSITIONING OF AIR CONDITIONING EXTERNAL UNITS AND PROPOSED OPENING HOURS FOR A PREMISES WITHIN THE CURTILAGE OF LISTED BUILDING. MAPLE BARN, BEECHES FARM ROAD, BUCKHAM HILL, ISFIELD, TN22 5QD: **APPROVED**

Application No. WD/2025/2364/FA VARIATION OF CONDITION 2 OF WD/2024/0487/FA (VARIATION OF CONDITION 13 OF WD/2023/1594/F (ERECTION OF TWO DETACHED DWELLINGS, WITH ACCESS, GARAGES AND ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING) TO ENABLE RELOCATION OF GARAGES AND VISITORS SPACE TOGETHER WITH UPDATED LANDSCAPING AND FENESTRATION CHANGES TO THE HOUSES INCLUDING ADDITIONAL ROOFLIGHTS LAND TO THE WEST OF CULPEPER CLOSE, STATION ROAD, ISFIELD TN22 5FA: **APPROVED**

10. Expenditure

- To ratify December expenditure as itemised on the schedule

Unanimously ratified December expenditure of £3745.41 – Cllr AK signed to that effect

- To approve January expenditure as itemised on the schedule

Unanimously approved to release payments to the value of £1002.97 – Cllr AK signed to that effect

11. Bank reconciliation

To **RESOLVE** to approve the bank reconciliation and corresponding bank statements for IPC.

- Unanimously approved – Cllr AK signed to that effect

12. Year to Date Accounts

To **NOTE** the actual v budget expenditure to date

- Duly noted

13. Interim Internal Audit Report

To **NOTE** report provided by Mulberry & Co and confirm to engage Mulberry & Co as internal auditor for 2026-2028

- Clerk advised that a few minor things flagged – Members interest – which she will ask Cllrs to fill out at the March meeting as these couldn't be located.
- Matrix for Risk Management – Clerk is happy with current Risk Management and a coloured matrix isn't required.
- IT Policy was adopted in November – Auditor didn't pick this up.
- General Reserves at the time sat at £52k. Clerk doesn't see this as a problem and it wasn't discussed at the audit to the Clerk by the auditor. Council agreed that they were happy with the level of general reserves as covers basis for any urgent works that may be required.

14. Grant Application

To **CONSIDER** grant application to equip the new Theatrical Society.

- Application requested for £1500. Clerk advised budget for year £1000. Unanimously agreed to grant £1500. IPC felt it was a worthy cause to consider granting the full amount.

15. Isfield Recreation Ground

To **APPROVE** the Charity Annual Return to 31st March 2025

- Unanimously approved. **Clerk to action**

16. Symbol of Remembrance

To **CONSIDER** erection of suggested location (next to Parish sign) by The Women in Isfield Group – subject to further information being received.

- Clerk to approach once more as information has not been forthcoming. **Clerk to action and report back.**

17. The Pound

To **DISCUSS** ownership and maintenance

- Clerk to write to Isfield place about ownership and that residents contact the Council on occasion about the maintenance of The Pound. **Clerk to action.**

18. Update: Recreation Land Registration

To receive the above from the Clerk

- Clerk advised still with Land Registry.

19. Update: EV Charge Points

To **RECEIVE** as above from Cllr Cramond.

- Nothing to report – based on 18 above.

20. Reports from Council representatives

To **NOTE** verbal reports from Councillors – e.g. Recreation Ground, Village Hall.

- Cllr AK – Playing Field fairly quiet. Wants to address the hire fees of the use of clubs as this has not been reviewed for quite some time. Cricket and Stoolball – 10% and Colts 5% and review each year. Clerk to put on March agenda for formal approval. **Clerk to action.**
- Water meter – thought meter was by the entrance on left hand side near entrance to car park. Meter that was being read was not associated with the pavilion. Castle Water have been instructed to come and read (still waiting). **Clerk to chase.** Cllr GS requested that when they read it to take a photograph of the meter. Cllr AK confirmed that David spent a lot of time on it and to note that as it hasn't been read for a long time the bill could be high. **Clerk to action.**

21. Notification of meeting/Suggested items for next agenda

To **NOTE** any suggested items for the next meeting.

- Cllr AK – requested to formally add to the agenda the discussion of an outdoor gym at the playing field. **Clerk to action.**

Meeting Closed: 20.30

Date of next meeting: 25th March 2025 – 19:30 Village Hall