

IPC Chairman's Report May 2023 – May 2024

There have been several changes since the last AGM with councillor Sanjeev Joshi resigning in July 2023 and Penny Simpson resigning as Chair and councillor in Jan 2024. Two new members, Ross Dye and Elaine French were welcomed, however the Council is still under-strength with only 6 out of a possible 11 seats being filled.

Key achievements since the last AGM have been:

- A grant of £43k to the Village Hall Committee for much needed roof repairs, including a planned installation of solar panels to reduce heating costs and carbon footprint.
- Focussed communications with West Sussex Highways resulting in much improved road repairs and drainage works around the parish, albeit that there is still more that can be done. Initiatives on speed control including the installation of SIDs are in progress.
- Establishment of a sub-committee to facilitate communications between stakeholders and developer in the Sumner's Field development.
- Construction of a new path joining the car park and the new school crossing to provide a safe all-weather walking route
- Implementation of new process and procedures resulting in a substantially improved audit result and, importantly, improved visibility of budget and cost control.
- 55 planning applications considered April 2023 – March 2024; a 25% increase year on year.
- Various grants totalling over £50k supporting Parish initiatives including the school garden, Playing Field and Village Hall Trust, Trim trail pathway, church yard, Tennis Club and Youth Club
- Accumulation of significant financial reserves to support Parish infrastructure maintenance and enhancement.
- Reduction of precept to £63k p.a. enabled by improved financial management, and in recognition of our relatively large financial reserve.

Looking to the future our focus will be:

- Recruitment of new councillors to cover workload and for succession planning
- Execution of existing planned projects and identification of new projects
- Continued vigilance in planning matters
- Adoption of our neighbourhood plan
- Ensuring that Parish views are represented during the Sumner's Field Development
- Continued focus on Highways and Drainage to improve the state of repair of roads, minimise flooding and increase safety
- Ensuring footpath maintenance issues are communicated and addressed
- Generation of a plan for Environmental projects around the Parish
- Improved effectiveness of communication within the Parish and with other relevant groups

Finally the Chairman thanks the Clerk, Parish, District and County Councillors for their efforts and looks forward to building on the achievements to date.

