



Short Statement from Chair of East Ilsley Parish Council

I am writing to say how sorry I am that the Annual Parish Meeting last night, 7.30pm via Zoom ended in a rather acrimonious way. I would like to formally apologise to all my fellow Councillors and people of the village.

It had been a very positive meeting where we had talked about how well placed the council was in relation to being compliant and adhering to NALC models of best practice as often as is practicable in small Parish Council run by volunteer councillors. The external auditor had no comments at all to make on how the finances were being run and remain content with how this is managed. We acknowledged the tremendous efforts of the community via the Emergency Response Team who have helped the vulnerable with a range of issues from medicines to food and ensuring all is ok. We welcomed a new councillor onto the PC and now only have one vacant place.

I am disappointed however that with the contentious issue of the Beeswax development on the edge of the village, which was not an agenda item, it appeared that the probity of the Council was being questioned in terms of the publicising of the development and ultimately the decision made to formally oppose the current application. Neither matters have any factual basis. The development has been discussed in public on at least four occasions and these meetings have been publicised in the usual way with all welcome to attend and take part. The submission of the objection to the development by the Parish Council is in the minutes of the meeting and again in the public domain.

It is now in the hands of the West Berkshire Council Planning team to decide whether it is given permission or not subject to review of any and all objections received by June 5th.

I hope my fellow councillors and the village accept my apology and I acknowledge I may have lapsed from the standards I would expect of myself in managing the meeting. I have had an exceptionally long week and due to my position working in the Health/Social Care arena I am under a great deal of stress.

Andrew Sharp
Chair of East Ilsley Parish Council