Events Working Group Proposal for the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting

The Events Working Group met via 'teams' on Tuesday 4th October to discuss the Annual Parish Meeting in 2023. The working group unanimously agreed that the event in 2022 had been a huge success and a great start for groups/organisations working along side each other in the community.

A long discussion took place on potential proposals for 2023 and below are the two concepts that the Events Working Group would like Full Council to consider.

Concept one:

Annual Parish Meeting to be held in Sayers Common – evening called 'Building our community'

The purpose of holding it in Sayers Common will help show that the Parish Council have recognised that there is a strong need to engage and break down barriers with the residents. This APM would be a much smaller event with the expectation that Hurstpierpoint residents may not travel to Sayers Common due to the parking issues and size of the venue. Sayers Common groups such as the Community shop, Village society and the pub would be invited to be involved in the event. A focus of the evening would be on isolation and loneliness with speakers such as Age UK. An opportunity would be given for the residents to ask questions that matter to them. It was discussed that a lot of the potential questions/possible complaints may not be about things that the Parish Council control, but it was felt that it was important for the residents to have their time to ask these questions. The room would be set in a cabaret style with smaller tables and chairs to allow more conversation to flow through the evening. Refreshments would need to be provided and organised by the Parish Council.

Main Positives:

- Engaging with the parish
- Trying to build relationships with key players in Sayers Common
- Trying to change the attitude about the Parish Council with the residents of Sayers Common

Main Negatives:

- Lack of parking
- Size of Venue
- Hurstpierpoint residents and groups are unlikely to attend

Concept Two:

Annual Parish Meeting to be held in Hurstpierpoint – evening called 'Volunteering – What's in it for me?'

Building momentum on last year's event the Annual Parish Meeting would be held at the Village Centre or Court Bushes Community Hub with a theme based on volunteering. All groups/charities/organisations will be invited to attend and showcase what they do and who they are in the same fresher style of last year. This year however the theme will be about volunteering

and if you would like to volunteer with a focus on 'what's in it for me' as well as community benefits. We would ask the participants to do one-minute pitches on what their volunteers do, benefits and how to get involved. Publicity will centre around inviting the community whether you already volunteer, would like to volunteer or just interested to learn more. The Chair has links with Mid Sussex Voluntary Action who again could invite groups and organisations that may be interested in an event such as this. If held at Court Bushes then the Melting Pot Café would be approached to provide refreshments, if it was held at the Village Centre it is more likely that the Parish Council would organise the refreshments.

The Events Working Group felt that if this concept was the preferred option, then transport for the Sayers Common residents should be considered to allow them to attend this event and again break down barriers. Quotes for transport would need to be found and a system to ensure that it would be used on the evening to make it good value for money. This would possibly be run with help from the Community Shop.

Main Positives:

- Large Venue and kitchen facilities
- Parking
- Building on the success of the last two years event
- A topic that could increase volunteers to our local groups and even ourselves with Hurst Meadows

Main Negative:

- Sayers Common residents are unlikely to attend – unless transport is put on for the evening

Confirmed date for the event is: Monday 22nd May 2023

RECOMMENDATION: The committee **AGREE** to holding the next Annual Parish Meeting at the Village Centre focusing on a volunteering theme and building on the success of the last two years.

Lorna Cooksey
Assistant Clerk
7th October 2022