



HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE RISK & CHANGE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

**Meeting of the Finance Risk & Change Governance Committee held on
Wednesday 19th June 2024 at 10:30am in the Committee Room at The Henfield Hall.**

Present: Cllrs J Jones (Chairman), M Morgan, G Perry, A Willard and J Potts.

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk) and Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager – OM).

MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Chairman declared an interest in item 6 as a Trustee of the Henfield Hall.

2. APOLOGIES

Cllrs Shaw, Goodyear and Leader.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15th MAY 2024

Approved, signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

a) Cemetery Lighting - Update.

The Village Amenities Committee have agreed to pay the installation cost of £1500 for new drivers in all twelve of the Cemetery lights. Cllr Morgan and the Clerk will draft a response to the supplier asking them to confirm that if there are any further failures then the bollards will be replaced in full at no further cost to the Council. Cllr Morgan confirmed that it is important to have the lights working as it is a well-used walking route to the primary school.

b) Community Infrastructure Levy Webpage.

This is now in effect and has links to the necessary application form. It was agreed to ask Henfield Community Partnership to help to publicise this to local clubs and organisations. It was noted that there is currently not a significant amount of CIL funding available but that this might change when housing development takes place, at which point the funding could be advertised more widely.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Neighbourhood Plan Review

The Chairman explained that the current Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was made in June 2021 and runs to June 2026. The Horsham District Council (HDC) Local Plan is due to run to 2031, has not yet been made but is anticipated early 2025. The NP could be impacted by changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, for example on biodiversity net gain and water neutrality. There is no statutory duty to review the NP but without one Henfield could be vulnerable to unwanted development and would only receive 15% Community Infrastructure Levy as opposed to 25%. It was felt that there would be no point in trying to review the NP prior to HDC making their Local Plan, and that there could also be significant changes following the general election. It was also noted that in 2021 the Council had been given the option by HDC for them to lead the future review, but this no longer seems to be the case. The Clerk added that he will be attending a meeting of the Plans Advisory Committee in order to discuss this in more detail.

6. **CONSIDER THE INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN APPLICATIONS RECEIVED**

The Chairman asked for any particular comments on the application forms received and added that she would like to see the applications taken to Full Council in July once they had been evaluated and scored. Cllrs Morgan and Willard agreed to meet with the Chairman to evaluate the applications. It is hoped that Cllr Goodyear may also be able to attend.

Action Point: The OM to arrange a meeting to discuss the applications in detail.

7. **FINANCE**

a) Confirmation of Reconciliation of Bank Accounts (May).
Each signed and dated by two Councillors.

b) Internal Controls (To Include Audit Check of Expenditure) – (May).
Each signed and dated by two Councillors.

c) Consider the Decision to Invest in a One-Year Ethical Account With The Charity Bank.
A letter was received on Friday 31st May from Charity Bank advising the that one year ethical fixed term investment was maturing. The deadline for response was 13th June, prior to this meeting. The Clerk explained that there had been three options; to take another one year fixed at 4.51%, a three year fixed at 4.06% or have the money returned to the Parish Council. If no action was taken by the deadline the money would have been transferred into a 40 day notice account. Full Council agreed in June that the Clerk would arrange the one year fixed option as there is a 14 day cancellation period, allowing this Committee to then ratify the decision or change to a different option if they wished. It was all agreed that the one year fixed option was the most appropriate, therefore no further action is needed.

Cllr Morgan asked whether the Committee could consider giving small grants to the community with any interest earned, as the Parish Council had done in the past prior to the significant reduction in interest rates. It was decided to consider this in more detail in September, when budget setting discussions commence.

The Clerk raised that he had been reminded that the Financial Services Compensation Scheme does not offer any protection when a local authority's income or expenditure is over £425,000. This year the budget is £406,000 so there is potential for this to become an issue in the near future. He will take further advice as to whether there are any ways to mitigate this.

8. **ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Morgan raised that the Village Amenities Committee had agreed not to install further dog waste bins, but would be trying an alternative approach to raise awareness and educate with the hope of changing behaviour. It is hoped that the Children and Young People Committee can also assist with an eye-catching campaign. He commented that, despite having some sympathy with homeowners having to pay full Council Tax as well as service charges, the Committee were keen not to set a precedent by installing bins on private estates. He added that potential home buyers should be fully informed of the situation before buying a property on a private estate.

The Clerk reported that, following a full review of Council documents, there will be several policies to consider at the next meeting, including Internal Controls. He added that the LGPS Discretions policy also needs updating and that Cllr Shaw had already made some suitable suggestions.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

17th July 2024.

Meeting Closed at 11.20am.