

HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE, RISK & CHANGE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

**Meeting of the Finance Risk & Change Governance Committee held on
Wednesday 19th March 2025 at 10:30am in the Committee Room at The Henfield Hall.**

Present: Cllrs J Jones (Chairman), E Goodyear, G Perry, M Morgan and S Leader.

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

MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None.

2. APOLOGIES

Cllrs Shaw and Potts.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15th FEBRUARY 2025

Approved. Signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

a) Cemetery Lighting - Update.

The lights have now been repaired. The contractor has confirmed they are fully working but they will be kept under observation.

b) Works Officer Storage.

A pre-planning application was submitted then returned asking for more detail on the map. This will be resent today. The Conservation Volunteers have been offered space in the Tanyard Barn by Horsham District Council (HDC) but it is currently full. Works Officers have been asked to make some space.

c) Council Van

A new van has been purchased at a cost of £11,750. Tow bar fitting will be £250 and sign writing £200. The Council have also been offered £3000 for the old van.

d) Website

Cllr Goodyear and the OM have prepared a specification and will be approaching a number of firms for quotations. It was noted that there are now specialist web developers for Parish Councils with the expertise to better understand the Council's requirements and statutory obligations. A new website will likely need to be funded by General Reserves.

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

None.

6. CONSIDER FUNDING FOR REPAIRS TO CRICKET CLUB CAR PARK

A quotation is still awaited from the Cricket Club but indicative costs suggest in the region of £15,000. An approach to HDC to use S106 funding for improvements to pitch facilities was refused on the basis that it would be considered a maintenance project and therefore not mitigating the impact of development. However this might be permitted if the car park was expanded to provide more parking spaces than previously.

7. **CONSIDER FORMATION OF DEVOLUTION WORKING GROUP**

It was all agreed to form a small working group to draw up terms of reference and conduct some initial scoping work, with a view to involving other Councillors and interested parties when more information is available. Cllr Leader suggesting creating a colour coded map to indicated ownership of land and assets in the village. It was agreed that the initial members would be the Chairman, Cllr Goodyear, Cllr Morgan, Cllr Perry and Cllr Kendall would also be approached to join.

Action Point: The group to arrange their initial meeting.

Action Point: The Clerk to write to Martin Boffey and Jane Eaton to thank them for their attendance at the Parish Council meeting in March and to ask about next steps.

8. **RECOMMEND FINAL PROPOSAL FOR COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The draft terms of reference was circulated prior to the meeting, along with some suggested amendments. Cllr Goodyear commented that the Recreation and Open Spaces Committee (ROS) had not had a chance to discuss the amendments suggested by the Village Amenities Committee (VAC). Following a brief discussion it was agreed that the best course of action would be to recommend the draft to Full Council as an interim version, with a view to the new Committee finalising their own terms of reference and name once it has been formed. It was agreed that Cemetery matters would not move to FR&CG Committee. It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Perry and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to recommend the draft proposal for Committee Terms of Reference to Full Council, subject to the amendment to include Cemetery matters.

9. **FINAL REVIEW OF BUSINESS PLAN 2022-2025**

An updated Business Plan Action Plan was circulated prior to the meeting. This forms a summary of all of the actions achieved. Cllr Perry asked that the community walk is named as 'Walk for Malcolm' in section 4 and requested that it is recorded that work is continuing on the Henfield Trails. Cllr Goodyear commented that she is working on a new Business Plan which will be simpler, more strategic and with fewer headings. She hopes to have a draft ready for the April meeting of this Committee. It was all agreed that, subject to the amendments mentioned above, the Business Plan 2022-2025 can now be considered closed.

Action Point: The OM to make the above amendments.

10. **REVIEW DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. It was confirmed that this version is unchanged from the previous one and that there have been no relevant changes to legislation. This procedure applies to employed staff only. It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Goodyear and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the Disciplinary Procedure.

11. **REVIEW ABSENCE FROM WORK POLICY**

A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. It was confirmed that this version is unchanged from the previous one and that there have been no relevant changes to legislation. It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Perry and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the Absence from Work Policy.

12. **REVIEW GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. It was confirmed that this version is unchanged from the previous one and that there have been no relevant changes to legislation. It was agreed that it would be useful to reference the recently updated Dignity at Work policy in paragraph 2. It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Morgan and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the Grievance Procedure subject to the above.

Action Point: The OM to make the amendment above.

13. **FINANCE**

- a) Confirmation of Reconciliation of Bank Accounts (February).
Each signed and dated by two Councillors.
- b) Internal Controls (To Include Audit Check of Expenditure) – (February).
Each signed and dated by two Councillors.

The Clerk reported that the annual maintenance charges for the Henfield Hall have now been received. They have increased from £7541 last year to £8728 this year, the main increases being for lighting and heating and rates. It was noted that a poor summer meant that the solar panels had not generated as much electricity as hoped. The Clerk will query the rates but, assuming they are correct, will pay the invoice.

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

Cllr Perry reported that the proposed Backsettow development had been discussed and approved by HDC subject to some work delegated to herself and Cllr Potts to seek to improve the plans for access via Furners Lane. Input will be sought from the Plans Advisory Committee; the Chairman will raise this at a forthcoming meeting.

Cllr Leader commented that Community Transport Sussex (CTS) have not yet approached Henfield Community Partnership (HCP) for advice on drawing up a business plan, which was a condition of continued funding.

Action Point: The Clerk to email CTS to remind them that a Business Plan has been requested and assistance is available from HCP.

To resolve, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, in accordance with Standing Orders s.1 (d) to exclude the press and public on the grounds that the confidential matters to be discussed under item 15 below would be prejudicial in the public interest.

The Operations Manager left the meeting.

15. **STAFF APPRAISALS**

The 2025 staff appraisals were discussed and will be carried out at the dates already agreed.

16. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

16th April 2025.

Meeting Closed at 12.10pm.