



HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of Henfield Parish Council held on Tuesday 1st April 2025 at 7.00pm in The Henfield Hall.

Present: Cllrs E Goodyear (Chairman), J Jones, G Perry, S Leader, A May, F Ayres, M Morgan, R Kendall, D Grossmith, D Jemmett, J Potts and M Andrews.

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager) and five members of the public.

MINUTES

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

None.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Cllrs Shaw, Willard and Simmonds. Also, Cllr Payne – West Sussex County Council (WSSCC).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 11th MARCH 2025**

Cllr Perry stated that under item 8. Horsham District Council Report it should have stated that the Scout Building project is eligible to apply for a grant, not that it has been awarded a grant. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman with this amendment.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(a) Devolution Working Group

A working group has been formed with the initial intention of drawing up terms of reference. The members of the group are the Chairman, Cllr Jones, Cllr Morgan, Cllr Perry and Cllr Kendall. Input will be sought from additional Councillors and relevant community organisations as the need arises.

(b) New Parish Council Website

A specification for a new website has been drawn up and three companies approached for quotation. Funding may need to be from General Reserves.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

The members of the public were all in attendance to discuss the Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) application for footpath from Craggitts Lane to the High Street. A representative spoke and stated that he believed that the application had been instigated by the death of one of the landowners in August 2024. He added that the family concerned had not had intentions of closing the access up until now but would now begin the process to secure the land. The family added that they were disappointed at the lack of informal discussion prior to the application being submitted and felt the Parish Council lacked empathy. A resident of Bishop Lane agreed that affected residents should have been consulted as there is a potential negative impact on the value of their homes.

The Chairman replied that the Parish Council were responding to a residents' request to apply for the DMMO in April 2024, not in August. The Chairman apologised that the timing of the notification may have inadvertently been distressing for the family present. The Parish Council are not the instigators of the application but were duty bound to respond once residents had made the request. This application had been supported with evidence statements from 27 residents and the Parish Council has followed the process laid down by WSSCC. There are five landowners affected. The application will be considered and determined by WSSCC.

Two members of the public left the meeting.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

6. **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

No report was received from Cllr Payne prior to the meeting.

7. **HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Potts reported that the Community Climate Fund is now open for applications and that there will be an important vote on a new constitution for Horsham District Council tomorrow. He is dealing with concerns regarding new parking restrictions in North Mead with residents. He added that the planning application for the land south of Furners Lane has been discussed but there are further queries over the access to the site.

8. **UPDATE ON THE DARK SKY STATUS**

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that this issue is relevant to all Committees. Cllr Grossmith recommended drawing up a Dark Skies policy in order to advise, educate and offer advice. It was agreed to refer this to the Village Amenities Committee.

9. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE (TORs)**

A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. The aim is to propose a new committee "Village Amenities and Open Spaces" (working title) at the May AGM. The Chairman explained that the TORs could be amended by the newly formed committee along with them choosing their own name. She added that she hopes with more focussed agendas that meetings should not last more than two hours. Membership of Committees will be finalised at the May meeting, in the meantime the Clerk will ask all Councillors to submit their top three preferences. Cllr May commented that she doesn't see how she would fit in to the new Committee and that meetings could be too long and would not allow time for general and strategic discussion. It was suggested that this could take place in working groups. Cllr Leader suggested that as membership of the Finance Committee (FRC) would be impacted that perhaps the Chair and Vice Chair of the new Committee should both be members of FRC rather than just the Chair. The Clerk added that the office staff are happy with the proposal and that it is possible to change again in future if it was felt the new structure was not working. It was generally agreed that flexibility is important.

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Grossmith and **VOTED 11 in favour and 1 against** to approve the Committee Terms of Reference.

10. **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN MAY**

As mentioned in the previous item, membership of Committees and representation on outside bodies will be discussed at the AGM in May.

(A) Finance, Risk & Change Governance

Cllr Jones invited questions on recent minutes. It was noted that a new electric van has been purchased for the works team and work has begun on a new Business Plan.

(a) Summary of £26,876.58 Expenditure from 1st March to 31st March 2025.
Noted by Council.

(b) Select Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Check – March.
Cllr Grossmith selected Sainsburys.

(B) Plans Advisory

The Chairman reported that an extraordinary meeting has been held to discuss the proposal for development south of New Hall Lane in Small Dole. It was noted that this site is not in the Neighbourhood Plan but is in the draft Horsham Local Plan. Water neutrality for the site has been addressed.

(C) Recreation & Open Spaces

(a) Definitive Map Modification Order Application

This was discussed under Open Forum. Cllr Perry apologised to the members of the public for any offence caused by the timing of the application for the DMMO.

The Committee has been discussing the cricket club car park, S106 funding may be available.

(D) Village Amenities

Cllr Morgan reported that plans continue for the VE day celebration. The BP Guild will be opening a bar from 7pm. With regards to Active Travel, the traffic sensors promised in January have still not been installed by WSCC.

(a) Mock Bridge Flooding Signage.

The next meeting is in two weeks.

(E) Children & Young People

Cllr Leader reported that a pre planning application has been submitted to HDC and the Committee are considering additional equipment for the Rothery Field.

(F) Museum

Cllr Potts reported that the Museum will be closed for digitisation work from 14th April to the end of Easter.

(G) Joint Commons

Cllr Perry reported that the conservation volunteers are working on clearing a space for storage at the Tanyard Barn.

11. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Grossmith reported that the broken glass at the Padel court has now been replaced and Community Payback will be removing stones from the grass. Discussions continue on how to protect the glass going forward. There are also discussions taking place on how to re position the entrance to Sharkies.

Cllr Leader reported on a successful Coffee on the Kerb event which now has three venues and will take place on the second Saturday of the month.

12. PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES

There has been an increased presence outside One Stop with officers giving advice and guidance on parking on the zig zag lines. It is hoped this will continue.

13. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

It was noted that the second Henfield Rainbows unit has closed due to lack of volunteers to run it.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 6th May 2025.

Meeting Closed at 8.25pm.