

HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

**Annual General Meeting of Henfield Parish Council held on Tuesday 6th May 2025 at 7.00pm
in The Henfield Hall.**

Present: Cllr E Goodyear (Chairman), J Jones, G Perry, S Leader, D Grossmith, R Shaw, M Morgan, A Willard, R Kendall, M Andrews, C Simmonds and D Jemmett

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager) and Cllr S Payne – West Sussex County Council (WSCC).

MINUTES

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR FORTHCOMING YEAR**
The Clerk introduced the first item. It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Perry, **SECONDED** by Cllr Jones and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to elect Cllr Goodyear as Chairman for the forthcoming year.
2. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**
None.
3. **APOLOGIES**
Cllrs Ayres and Potts.
4. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR FORTHCOMING YEAR**
It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Kendall and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to elect Cllr Jones as Vice-Chairman.
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 1st APRIL 2025**
Approved. Signed and dated by the Chairman.
6. **REVIEW OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES**
A list of Committee membership was circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman thanked all Councillors for submitting their first and second choices. Membership of the Joint Commons Committee has not yet been finalised as there are ongoing discussion with Horsham District Council (HDC) on how many Parish Councillors are required. Cllrs Simmonds and Leader both offered to step down if required. It is intended that the new Committee will meet first on the 14th May, the date that the previous Village Amenities Committee would have been due to meet. It was all agreed by show of hands to approve the Committee membership.
7. **REVIEW OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**
It was all agreed by show of hands to approve the representatives to outside bodies.
8. **APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR**
The Clerk explained that the Parish Council is coming up to the third year of a contract with Mulberry Local Authority Services, but that the appointment still needs to be minuted for audit purposes. It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Grossmith and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to appoint Mulberry Local Authority Services as the internal auditor.
9. **MATTERS ARISING**
None.
10. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - a) V E Day
The Chairman reminded all that there will be an event to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day on the Rothery Field on Thursday 8th May. The bar will open at 7pm, singing of 'I Vow to Thee my Country' and reading of the Proclamation at 9.15pm followed by Beacon lighting at 9.30pm

b) Inter Parish Meeting

Many other local Parishes from the Horsham District as well as some from Mid Sussex met before Easter to discuss the impacts of devolution. It was also attended by WSCC leader Paul Marshall and representatives from Somerset and Buckinghamshire Councils who had been through the process already. The Devolution working group will meet to discuss in more detail tomorrow.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

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

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

11. **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Payne reported on The Big Fix, supporting local repair cafés and Staying Safe Online, a scam checker tool called 'Ask Sylvia'. She also mentioned that WSCC have signed a new drainage contract with FM Conway. This will result in more frequent gully clearance and more use of CCTV. She also mentioned that the Sussex Police rural crime team will be running street surgeries in the area. She is currently in discussions with officers at WSCC in reference to the traffic management plan for the Rampion 2 works as there is concern about the level of heavy goods traffic while construction of the new Bolney substation takes place. No detail on the plan is available yet. A meeting with Access Henfield will take place towards the end of the month to discuss dropped kerbs in Henfield. It was also noted that traffic sensors appear to have been installed at the primary school and near Wantley roundabout.

12. **HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Perry reported that HDC has a new Chair and Vice Chair. HDC has robustly rejected the findings of the planning inspector with regards to the Local Plan and have written to the Minister of State in response. HDC is running a litter campaign encouraging residents to report roadside litter. Cllr Perry hopes that a way forward can be found for North Mead residents without the need for parking permits. Cllr Perry will be looking into the large rent increase for the Guide Hut and is currently also working on a number of improvements to the plans for the development south of Furners Lane including extra parking, wider footways with solar lighting and swift bricks for the new homes. Unfortunately there are no possible improvements that can be made to the junction of Furners Lane with the High Street. Cllr Perry will check whether there will be restrictions on timing of lorries and contractor parking, as these were particular concerns raised by the Plans Advisory Committee. Finally it was noted that there has been a successful grant application to ensure that the Morley Farm abattoir can continue to operate, an important resource for local farmers.

Cllr Grossmith left the meeting.

13. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR 2024/25**

The report was circulated prior to the meeting. There were no issues or recommendations. The Chairman thanked the Clerk. It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Jones, **SECONDED** by Cllr Morgan and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the internal auditor's report for 2024/25.

14. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE YEAR-END ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25**

The year end accounts were circulated prior to the meeting. It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Kendall, **SECONDED** by Cllr Perry and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the year end accounts for the financial year 2024/25.

15. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR 2024/25**

The statement was circulated prior to the meeting. It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Jones, **SECONDED** by Cllr Simmonds and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the annual governance statement for 2024/25.

16. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS FOR 2024/25**
The statements were circulated prior to the meeting. It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Morgan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Shaw and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the accounting statements for 2024/25.
17. **MOTION: APPROVE THE CURRENT STANDING ORDERS**
A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. There have been small amendments to the model standing orders in section 14 simplifying the code of conduct and to section 18 relating to procurement. The standing orders will need to be updated again once the new committee has chosen a name.

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Kendall and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the current Standing Orders.
18. **MOTION: APPROVE THE CURRENT FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**
A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. There is an amendment to section 14 as a result of the Procurement Act 2023 overturning the previous European legislation. The name of the new committee will need to be inserted into section 5. It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Jones, **SECONDED** by Cllr Shaw and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the current Financial Regulations.
19. **COUNCILLOR VACANCY**
There is now one vacancy due to the resignation of Cllr May last month. Notice was served to HDC and permission has now been given to co-opt. The vacancy will be advertised in the usual ways including in the June editions of BN5 and the Parish Magazines. The deadline for application will be the 25th June so that any received can be discussed at the July meeting of Full Council.
20. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**
- (A) **Finance, Risk & Change Governance**
Cllr Jones reported that the Committee had thoroughly discussed the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations as well as the terms of reference for the devolution working group. There had also been discussion on the digital screens, Cllr Leader will raise with Henfield Community Partnership as it was felt that content would be better managed by them. The Committee will be discussing the River Recovery declaration at their next meeting.
- (a) Summary of £27,807.16 Expenditure from 1st April – 30th April 2025.
Noted by Council.
- (b) Select Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Checks – April.
Cllr Andrews selected mower repairs, PJ Barrow.
- (B) **Plans Advisory**
a) Local Plan
This was discussed briefly under item 12.
- (C) **Recreation & Open Spaces**
Cllr Perry reported that the committee recently discussed the results of the tree survey and refurbishment of the cricket club car park.
- (D) **Village Amenities**
Cllr Morgan reported that the new leisure centre car park lights have now been installed and that summer planting of baskets and tubs will take place towards the end of the month.

(E) Children & Young People

Cllr Leader reported that the pre-planning application for the skate park is still outstanding. Cllr Perry will chase as well as also for the pre planning application for the works officers' storage container. The committee will shortly be discussing new play equipment for the Rothery Field and continues discussions on Active Travel with the primary school.

(F) Museum

The Chairman reported that the digitisation project is going well and the committee will meet later this month.

(G) Joint Commons

Cllr Perry reported that the committee are meeting soon and that rangers have cut the grass around the seats on the Common.

21. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Leader reported on the numerous events taking place this weekend for the Year of Care and Wellbeing and encouraged all to attend. The leisure centre and tennis club are holding open days with taster sessions and thirty exhibitors will have information stands at Red Oaks. There is also a Coffee on the Kerb event being hosted by Cllr Willard at his home on Barrow Hill. Cllr Simmonds also mentioned that Access Henfield are offering mobility scooter training, either at people's homes or as part of a group session.

22. PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES

Nothing to report.

23. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

None.

24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 3rd June 2025.

Meeting Closed at 7.45pm.