



## **HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION** **COMMITTEE**

**Meeting of the Local Government Reorganisation  
Committee on 25th September 2025 at 10am in the Henfield Hall.**

**Present:** Cllrs J Jones (Chairman), E Goodyear, D Grossmith, R Kendall, M Morgan, G Perry and A Willard.

**In attendance:** Mr K Wright (Clerk) and Mrs B Samrah (Parish Administrator - PA).

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR FORTHCOMING YEAR**

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Morgan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Perry and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to elect Cllr Jones as Chairman.

#### **2. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were none.

#### **3. APOLOGIES**

Were received from Cllr Shaw.

#### **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 Perry as Vice Chairman.

#### **5. APPROVAL OF NOTES OF DEVOLUTION WORKING GROUP MEETING HELD ON 3<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025**

These were approved. They were signed and dated by the Chairman.

#### **6. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- 1 To agree Terms of Reference – The Chairman agreed to work on Terms of Reference with Cllr Goodyear and circulate the draft before the next meeting for feedback.

**ACTION POINT:** The Chairman and Cllr Goodyear agreed to revise and amend ToR and circulate prior to next meeting.

#### **7. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman thanked Cllr Perry for her email in relation to HDC's decision on selecting Option B2; two unitary authorities within current West Sussex footprint, linking Henfield with Mid Sussex and Crawley in one authority. Cllr Perry added other points of interest:-

- Adur and Worthing wished to remain working together.
- This would create authorities of similar size of approximately 500,000 people and a likely representation of two members per authority.
- HDC had been a council for 50 years and acknowledged that there were other options but felt that this option best served the needs of the people of Horsham District.
- HDC acknowledged that other councils had many good ideas.
- All authorities would be voting the following day.
- Surrey is still considering Gatwick option.
- Brighton & Hove option would be likely to put Henfield with Chichester, Crawley and HDC. (Cllr Perry said that she would try to get this document and circulate)
- HDC felt that local people may lose their voice hence the wish to allow Parishes to take control locally.
- HDC has a lower council tax band than Crawley, and that HPC council tax likely to increase.
- Decision in HDC based on business case. It was understood that the Conservative Group were going to abstain from voting; however, but some Conservative councillors did, in fact, vote.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

#### **OPEN FORUM**

There were no members of the public present.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

#### **8. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were none.

## **9. REPORT ON INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM HDC (ASSETS IN HENFIELD PARISH)**

- 1 Report on meetings at Oreham Common and Broadmare (Broadmere) Common – The Chairman thanked Cllr Perry for organising the tour. She said that she felt that these were amenities which were worth conserving and preserving. The Clerk said that if Henfield took over their maintenance there would be increased cost of accessing expertise. Cllr Perry said that at the last Joint Commons Committee (HJCC) meeting it had been acknowledged that the road leading onto Oreham Common is in a poor condition. Cllr Morgan stated that the Land Registry Documents confirmed that all the land, including the road, is owned by HDC. Cllr Grossmith asked how it was maintained and Cllr Morgan said that HDC would be responsible; however, he believed that the residents in Broadmare Common may carry out some repairs themselves. He advised that the residents of Henfield Common paid towards repairs to the road there. Cllr Perry said that the HDC officers would like to continue to look after the Commons and that they assume their work will transfer to a Unitary Authority and provide a service which would be paid for by individual parishes as needed.  
Cllr Grossmith said that, although the Commons are a significant area of Henfield, they would be a very small part of a unitary authority and may not get the priority that this council would want. It was agreed that a plan of improvement would be necessary with timescales. It was also agreed that the HPC had to consider the consequences if the parish did not take on the maintenance of the Commons. Cllr Morgan said that he believed that the Commons have been underfunded for many years. He thought that grants may be available for the natural assets within but that the roads would not be covered. A number of suggestions were raised including inviting residents of the Commons to a meeting to consider a way forward.  
It was felt that it would be best if HPC could look after the Commons but with assistance from the Countryside and Parks Team and with funding.
- 2 Documents prepared by Cllr Morgan – Cllr Morgan confirmed he had received title deeds for the assets and that he would arrange for them to be scanned and circulated. He said that his main concerns were for the areas in Deer Park phase 1 and 2 including Danny's Pond, verges and play areas where there would be regular costs with Tree and RoSPA Surveys as well as maintenance costs. He added that Deer Park stage 3 was looked after by a Management Company. Cllr Perry said that the HDC Countryside Team felt that there was already a great deal of expertise within the parish to look after the green spaces and that she felt bringing decision making on these areas closer to the Parish would be advantageous.  
It was agreed by everyone that the Parish Council should express an interest in all the assets and wait to see what funding would accompany their transfer. Cllr Morgan also said that it would be important to consider legal costs. Cllr Willard said that it would be useful to consider which other areas might be affected by the demise of HDC, such as foodbank, lottery, business enterprise etc; the Chairman suggested that this be added to the next agenda.  
*Cllr Grossmith left the meeting at 11am.*
- 3 Timescales from HDC – There was no further information.
- 4 Biodiversity Net Gain (BDNG) from HDC – Cllr Perry explained that there was an officer at HDC who is responsible for this and that any habitat area could be registered for BDNG. She said that the Commons could be included, and added that the wildlife sites would need to be surveyed to establish what was living or growing there. Cllr Goodyear asked that HJCC monitor this and that it should also be raised at the next full Council meeting.  
The Clerk commented that it would be helpful to know whether there would be a commitment not to cap the Parish Council precept.

## **10. REPORT INFORMATION ON CAR PARKS**

Second Meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> October. It was confirmed that all five parish councils would be represented and that the MD of one of the car park management companies would also attend. It was anticipated that the car parks could be run according to each parish's wishes. The Chairman and Cllr Goodyear would represent Henfield, but the Chairman asked Committee members to submit any specific questions which they might have, before the meeting.

## **11. NEWS FROM WIDER AREA**

There was nothing further to add to information given in Item 7.

## **12. CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

## **13. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**

It was agreed that this Committee recommends registering an interest in all assets in principle and getting more information before making a final decision on which assets to adopt. It was further agreed to take this to the next full Council meeting.

**ACTION POINT:** The Clerk would ensure that this would be included on the next Full Council Meeting agenda.

## **14. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2025. Cllr Morgan gave his apologies for that meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.23am.