

HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL - FINANCE RISK & CHANGE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Meeting of the Finance Risk & Change Governance Committee held on Wednesday 21ST January 2026 at 10:30am in the Committee Room of The Henfield Hall.

Present: Cllrs J Jones (Chairman), E Goodyear, M Morgan, D Jemmett, R Shaw and S Leader

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager – OM), Mrs H Boosey (Parish Administrator) and a representative from Henfield Football Club (HFC).

MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None.

2. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received from Cllr Potts.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17TH DECEMBER 2025

Approved. Signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

- a) Update on the Review of Parish Council Human Resources Documentation. Cllr Shaw confirmed he would begin work on this documentation following completion of the work on the Neighbourhood Plan review.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

The representative from HFC briefly summarised their request for assistance to identify a suitable location for a multisport facility. An area of approximately the size of the Kings Field would be needed to accommodate pitches, a building and car parking. The likely cost would be £2 million and HFC are confident that they could obtain funding from the Football Foundation, as there has been an identified need for this type of facility in the district.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

It was all agreed by show of hands to discuss item 9 on the agenda directly following the Open Forum.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

6. CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS FOR ASSERTION 10 – DIGITAL & DATA COMPLIANCE

Information on the new requirements under Assertion 10 were circulated prior to the meeting. The two items that Council need to address are the accessibility requirements of the website and the IT policy. It was noted that Council already comply with the other new requirements.

a) REVIEW HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL'S INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

A draft policy based on the National Association of Local Councils' (NALC) model was circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the sections that are only relevant to much bigger organisations were removed or simplified. It was suggested that 2.1.2 is amended to take account of the fact that portable devices such as laptops will occasionally be left, for example, in the boot of a locked car. It was suggested that all Councillors and staff are reminded about the importance of security of confidential data. There is a minor grammar amendment needed at the bottom of page 6.

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Shaw and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the IT Policy subject to the amendments agreed above.

Action Point: Cllr Goodyear to amend the policy as above.

b) **UPDATE ON A NEW PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE**

Some initial investigation work has taken place with potential suppliers identified. It was noted that, as a new website is needed in order to comply with audit requirements for accessibility, this may not be achieved in time for the AGAR; however the Council will be able to demonstrate significant progress on this matter.

7. **CONSIDER THE BIODIVERSITY DUTY**

A draft policy based on the NALC model was circulated prior to the meeting. It was generally agreed that the high-level principles in the policy seemed sensible and that more detail specific to Henfield could be added to the action plan section. It was agreed that this matter will be passed to the Amenities and Open Spaces (AOS) Committee to consider, with the suggestion that local outside organisations are consulted and perhaps a small working group is formed.

Action Point: The OM to ensure this item is included on the AOS agenda.

8. **CONSIDER THE COUNCILLOR STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE**

This statement was circulated prior to the meeting. The suggestion from NALC is that this statement is signed by Councillors as part of the Civility and Respect Programme and should be read by Councillors in conjunction with the Code of Conduct. The OM is also drawing up some additional guidance on legislation and best practice for effective working with officers. It was agreed that this will be considered at the Annual General Meeting of Full Council in May.

9. **DISCUSS HENFIELD FOOTBALL CLUB'S DESIRE TO EXPAND ITS FACILITIES**

This item was discussed immediately following the Open Forum.

A detailed request letter had been circulated prior to the meeting. Councillors thought it unlikely that landowners who were keen to develop local sites in Henfield would agree to allocating such a large area for sport/leisure. HFC were advised that there are two large plots opposite Henfield Business Park which may be suitable, and asked HFC to keep the Council updated on their progress.

The representative from HFC left the meeting at 10.47am.

10. **REVIEW THE INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN GUIDELINES**

An amended draft version was circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that there is likely to be a significant increase in CIL funds received by the Council, therefore it is necessary to put in some extra requirements with regards to financial status and eligibility. It was agreed that some clarity is required to the specification that, if an application is not from a Henfield-based organisation, 80% of those benefitting from its activities should be Henfield residents. It was also suggested that it may be too prescriptive to dismiss an application on the basis that an organisation has twelve months' unrestricted reserves. It was agreed to alter 'audited accounts' to 'examined accounts' as a requirement.

Action Point: Cllr Goodyear to make the amendments above for consideration at the next meeting.

11. **AGREE A DATE FOR THE FEBRUARY MEETING**

Due to the planned absence and annual leave of office staff it was agreed not to hold a meeting in February unless there is an urgent matter to address that cannot be dealt with by Full Council.

To resolve, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, in accordance with Standing Orders s.3 (d) to exclude the press and public on the grounds that the confidential matters to be discussed under item 12 below would be prejudicial in the public interest.

12. **MOTION: TO REVIEW THE HOURS WORKED BY THE WORKS OFFICERS**

An agreement was reached for the amendment to working hours.

13. **FINANCE**

a) Confirmation of Reconciliation of Bank Accounts (December).

Each signed and dated by two Councillors.

b) Internal Controls (To Include Audit Check of Expenditure) – (December).
This will be dealt with in the March meeting due to some necessary paperwork being unavailable as it is awaiting audit.

14. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

It was confirmed that the request for the final payment of £10,000 to the Scout Community Centre will be discussed at Full Council.

It was reported that Council have agreed to accept a donation of £1000 towards the renovation cost of the grass area and planting beds in Bishop Lane, from the developer who had caused significant damage there.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

18th March 2026.

Meeting Closed at 11.42am.