HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of Henfield Parish Council held on Tuesday 3rd November 2026 at 7.00pm in The Henfield Hall.

Present: Cllrs E Goodyear (Chairman), J Jones, G Perry, M Morgan, D Grossmith, A Willard, I Choudhury, N Duncanson, J Potts, R Kendall, D Jemmett and F Ayres.

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Deputy Clerk), Cllr R Noel – West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and three members of the public.

MINUTES

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**
   None.

2. **APOLOGIES**
   Were received from Cllr Shaw and Cllr Leader.
   Cllr Andrews did not attend.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6th OCTOBER 2026**
   Approved. Signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**
   None.

5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
   a) Remembrance Events November 2026
      The Chairman reminded Councillors about upcoming Remembrance events, the Poppy Cross for primary school children on Friday 6th November, the parade on Sunday 8th (to muster at the War Memorial at 9am) and a short service at 11am on Wednesday the 11th.

   b) Community Resilience
      The Chairman confirmed that the framework and severe weather plan are currently being reviewed and it is hoped that a meeting can take place with the WSCC representative from the Sussex Resilience Forum to further understand the level of preparedness and the support available from outside organisations.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

6. **OPEN FORUM**
   The members of the public asked for more information on the Community Resilience Plan and offered to assist on behalf of Sustainable Henfield. The Chairman explained that the Parish Council's main priority is to be able to coordinate a response and to promote preparedness, encouraging residents to be self-reliant while ensuring the most vulnerable are identified alongside established partner organisations such at the Haven and Medical Centre. It was noted that the framework was very successful during COVID with a village helpline established within 48 hours. During the review process further clarity will be sought on each local authority's role to ensure assistance is available and to avoid possible duplication. It was noted that residents may appreciate some reassurance.

The members of the public left the meeting.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

7. **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**
   Cllr Noel reported on Local Government Reorganisation, noting that a further Government announcement on timings was expected at the end of the year. Concerns were raised about

West Sussex County Council's financial position, including a projected deficit of over £46 million, although measures were being taken to improve efficiency. In Henfield, replacement sandstone paving on Church Street is expected to be completed this autumn, although progress on dropped kerbs remained slow. The Councillor also reported requests from residents for 20mph restrictions on roads Church Street and Nep Town Road and invited Councillor views. This issue will be discussed at the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee next week.

8. **HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Potts reported that the Local Plan hearing concluded on the 22nd October. The inspector indicated that the plan is sound and there will be further consultation in January. Horsham District Council elections will take place using existing boundaries in May 2027. The HDC Conservation Officer has inspected the George Hotel and is not currently concerned about the state of the building. This will be discussed further at the Plans Advisory Meeting on Thursday. DEFRA have agreed to £42 million funding for the Adur restoration project; works will mitigate flood risk, enhance biodiversity and water quality. Cllr Perry added that the planning inspector acknowledged that Henfield is taking more additional housing that would be expected for a village it's size. It was noted that there will not be a second detailed planning stage so the Parish Council will need to get ahead of negotiations with developers. She also reported that the Community Toilet Scheme is going ahead and will feature in the December BN5 magazine. She has also visited the food waste recycling centre and was impressed with the facilities. It was noted that there will shortly be a Southern Water consultation on recycling of drinking water.

9. **REVIEW THE BUDGETS FOR THE CURRENT 2026/27 FINANCIAL YEAR**

The Clerk explained that it is now an audit requirement to minute the review of the current year's budget. A report was circulated prior to the meeting including explanation and examples of any differences such as the £25,000 donation to the Leisure Centre for urgent roof repairs which had not been budgeted for. He invited any questions, there were none. Therefore, it was concluded that budget performance is satisfactory at this stage in the financial year.

10. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

(A) Finance, Risk & Change Governance

Cllr Jones reported that the committee has approved up to £2,000 for new signage and that they had decided not to replace the currently broken video recording equipment as viewing figures have declined and some Councillors felt that the quality of debate is impaired by being recorded. It was agreed to encourage more attendance by the public at meetings. It was also noted that the committee declined to make a grant to the Henfield Hall for new security doors and advised them instead to explore other funding options.

(a) Summary of £34,022.84 Expenditure from 1st October – 31st October 2026.
Noted by Council.

(b) Select Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Checks – October.
Cllr Grossmith selected Proludic - Trampoline.

(c) Budgets for 2027/28
A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. The current draft showed an increase in the precept to 5.8%. It was noted that it is difficult to predict employment costs at the current time and that it may be possible to lower this increase to be closer to the current rate of inflation.

(d) Request for a £250 Grant Towards the High Street Christmas Event.
Cllr Willard stated the proposed event facilitated by Henfield Community Partnership is to support footfall for shops in the High Street in the weeks leading up to Christmas and that Horsham District Council (HDC) has pledged £500.

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Grossmith and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the request in principle subject to further detail being received on how the funds will be spent.

(B) Plans Advisory

Cllr Grossmith reported that the Taylor Wimpey development north of Wantley is likely to be approved but that if the Local Plan is also approved this should prevent further speculative development.

(C) Amenities & Open Spaces

Cllr Morgan reported that work is due to start shortly on the repainting of the bus shelter, although external works may need to be delayed due to weather conditions. The new planting beds in Bishop Lane should be completed in the next fortnight. It was confirmed that the shutters on the bus shelter are not currently being closed. Since CCTV was installed there has no longer been a significant issue with anti-social behaviour.

(D) Children & Young People

Cllr Willard reported that a test hole to inspect foundations at the skate park has been dug and an engineer's report on how to proceed with extension plans is awaited. A residents' survey will be carried out regarding potential improvements for the Chessbrook play area.

(E) Museum

Cllr Potts reported that the committee has not met recently but mentioned that the costume curator has had research published on the Henfield stays that were found at the old workhouse. The items are on permanent loan at the London College of Fashion.

(F) Joint Commons

Cllr Perry reported that improvement works continue at the Tanyard and that work is now complete on the bund alongside the cricket pitch. The area has been seeded with wildflowers.

(G) Local Government Reorganisation

Cllr Jones reported that the committee will meet on the 25th November to discuss asset transfer.

11. **REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

None.

12. **PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES**

None.

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

None.

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 14 below would be prejudicial in the public interest.

The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Cllr Noel left the meeting.

14. **PARISH OFFICE STAFFING**

This matter was discussed and resolved under closed session.

15. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 1st December 2026.

Meeting Closed at 8.30pm.