

HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL - FINANCE RISK & CHANGE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

**Meeting of the Finance Risk & Change Governance Committee
held on Thursday 30th April 2020 at 2:30 pm via Zoom Conferencing.**

Present: Cllrs E Goodyear (Chairman), G Perry, J Jones, Ann Donoghue and Malcolm Eastwood

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk) and Mrs R Grantham (Parish Administrator)

MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None.

2. APOLOGIES

Cllr N Stevens.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18th FEBRUARY 2020

Approved, to be signed and dated by the Chairman at a later date.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman summarised that the action points from the previous meeting in relation to the Annual Parish Meeting and website had been carried out. However adding photographs of Councillors and staff to the website is still outstanding.

The Chairman explained that the Declarations of Members' Interests had been temporarily removed from the website due to threats made to Cllr Eastwood during the Local Plan consultation period. This is because they contain Councillors' home addresses. These have now been reinstated.

She then commented that usage of the new website had significantly increased and made reference to data from Google analytics which now shows an average of 250-300 users per week, in comparison to around 20 per month on the old website. The pages visited most often currently are the home page, Coronavirus page and the 'contact us page.' She also stated that she felt more publicity for the website would be helpful in future and that Cllrs Jones and Perry are working with the Administrator to load more content onto the Open Spaces and Village Centre committee pages.

The Clerk commented that the new cemetery fees are still to be updated on the website and that this should also be communicated to local funeral directors. Cllr Jones suggested that the implementation of the new fees is delayed due to the current situation with Coronavirus. The Chairman commented that the new fees were agreed on the 18th of February with the intention of implementing for the start of the new financial year.

Following brief discussion it was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Jones, **SECONDED** by Cllr Perry and **VOTED** all in favour to delay introducing new cemetery fees and to review the situation in three months.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

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

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

5. **REVIEW OF COUNCIL PROCEDURES**

The Chairman explained that several policies are now due for review, most of them being on a three year cycle unless there is a statutory annual requirement. The Code of Conduct was last reviewed in 2012, as Henfield Parish Council (HPC) has been awaiting guidance from Horsham District Council (HDC). HDC have now released a draft which could be adopted by HPC as an interim measure until it is finalised. The Severe Weather Plan in November but it was felt more appropriate to have this reviewed sooner before the onset of winter.

Cllr Donoghue asked whether it would be more appropriate to also include the Emergency Plan alongside the Severe Weather Plan, but the Chairman advised waiting until the situation with Coronavirus is closer to return to normal in order to incorporate the lessons learnt. It was resolved to start gathering ideas for the Emergency Plan immediately with a view to discussing again in September.

Given the timescales outlined above the Chairman put forward her suggestion to divide the work on reviewing of documents among councillors as follows;

- Cllrs Jones and Kendall to review the Grievance Procedure.
- Cllrs Donoghue and Shaw to review the Disciplinary Procedure.
- Cllrs Donoghue and Shaw to review the Code of Conduct.
- Cllrs Perry and Simmonds to review the Severe Weather Plan.
- The Chairman, Cllr Eastwood and the Clerk to review the Standing Orders.

Cllr Donoghue then asked whether Cllr Morgan had volunteered to review the Code of Conduct. Cllr Eastwood explained that he is happy to be consulted. Cllr Eastwood also noted that he has read the draft Code of Conduct from HDC and it appears to be appropriate for use by HPC. He also noted that this new draft contains sanctions, which were not included in the previous policy.

Action Point: Councillors and the Parish Office to review the documents as outlined above and to have a first draft available for the next meeting of this committee.

To resolve, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, in accordance with Standing Orders s.1(d) to exclude the press and public on the grounds that the confidential matters to be discussed under items 6 & 7 below would be prejudicial in the public interest.

6. **MOTION: TO CONSIDER THE ONGOING PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR PARISH COUNCIL STAFF**

The motion was duly discussed.

7. **MOTION: TO REVIEW THE STAFFING REQUIRED IN THE PARISH OFFICE**

- a) Review the current position, including the Henfield Helpline

The motion was duly discussed.

- b) Consider the position after the Covid 19 lockdown has been lifted

The motion was duly discussed.

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

There were no other urgent matters raised by councillors.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday the 16th June 2020 at 2.30pm via Zoom conferencing.

Meeting Closed at 4:20pm.