

HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of Henfield Parish Council
held on Tuesday 2nd June 2020 at 2:30pm via Zoom Conferencing.**

Present: Cllrs M Eastwood (Chairman), E Goodyear, M Morgan, A Rickard, R Shaw, R Kendall, G Perry, A Sharp, D Jemmett, J Jones and A Donoghue.

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Administrator) and two members of the public.

MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS 'INTERESTS

None

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr N Farrell.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12th MAY 2020

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

4. MATTERS ARISING

a) Youth Club lighting

The Chairman confirmed that the lighting columns have been installed and that the tops have been sent away for etching in black to block any light shining towards nearby properties. Completion is expected in 7 to 10 days.

b) Finance items from the Internal Audit Report

This will initially be discussed by the Finance, Risk and Change (FRC) committee on the 16th of June and then brought back to Full Council in July.

c) S106 update regarding the Henfield Hall and Henfield Leisure Centre

Cllr Morgan explained that the Deed of Variation has yet to be signed. Ownership of the land was transferred from Persimmon to the Remus Management Company, so the deed has been sent to them to sign.

Cllr Kendall asked whether, assuming the application is approved, the leisure centre will have to pay invoices first and then reclaim the money. The Clerk confirmed that they will need to be paid first before reclaiming the funds, but that staged payments are possible. Cllr Morgan said he will discuss possible options with the Clerk.

Action Point: The Clerk to discuss payment arrangements for the leisure centre with Cllr Morgan.

d) Parish Council website update

The Chairman confirmed that the Covid 19 information on the website has been updated. Cllr Goodyear explained that there has been a recent problem with links on the website which the web developer PMW Ltd is looking into. She also reminded councillors to send a photograph of themselves to her or the administrator for inclusion on the 'Who We Are' page. Cllr Goodyear also commented that the new website has much higher volume of traffic than the previous one with over 500 regular users. The intention is to publicise the website further once restrictions are lifted.

- e) Cllr Potts to provide the Parish Office with some wording for Facebook, asking dog owners to keep their dogs on a lead when around livestock.
This item has not yet been actioned.

Action Point: The Clerk to contact Cllr Potts.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that the Haven has been awarded the Queens Award for Voluntary Service, which is an equivalent of an MBE in the voluntary sector. He commented that this is a very positive story for the village and that all involved should be very proud. Cllr Morgan suggested that a letter of congratulations is sent to the Haven, to which all agreed.

Action Point: The Chairman to send a letter of congratulations to the Haven on behalf of the Parish Council

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

Peter Hudson added his congratulations to the Haven and endorsed the decision to send a letter on behalf of the Council. He commented that he agreed with the suggestion to publicise the importance of keeping dogs on a lead around livestock, adding that it is terrible to see the result of dog attacks on sheep and their lambs. He also asked whether the issue of leaving gates open could also be addressed.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting

6. COVID 19 – PROGRESS REPORT

The Chairman reported that the opening hours of the Helpline have now reduced to 10am to 1pm, although Belinda Samrah is still monitoring calls and emails throughout the afternoon. The reduction is due to the NHS GoodSam scheme taking over collection and delivery of prescriptions, however some queries are being received relating to this again, as there have been reports of invasive questioning by the GoodSams helpline. This is leading residents to prefer using the Helpline again. Belinda is monitoring the situation and the Helpline is still busy with shopping and food deliveries.

With regards to the re-opening of retailers, the Chairman explained that a task force comprising Cllr Jones, Paul Crowe, Emma Osman from BN5 magazine and Belinda Samrah has been set up in order to support and advise retailers and local businesses with Lynda Spain the link at HDC. A small fund from Horsham District Council (HDC) may be available in order to assist with this. Their first task will be to establish what support is needed. Cllr Morgan confirmed that the fund is £128,000 across the market towns in the district.

The Chairman then asked Council whether they would support a return of the Showcase Tour, as HDC is considering running it again next year in support of the retailers. He commented that it attracted over 1,500 visitors last year, but that a lot of help would be needed with marshalling. Cllr Morgan stated it was one of the best attended events last year. Cllr Donoghue commented that local traders should also be consulted.

Action Point: The Clerk to contact Cllr Simmonds in order to request support from the BP Guild.

The Chairman commented that the Administrator, Sue Willis and Paul Crowe will be working on a database of local businesses, expanding the list that the Community Partnership has already started. This will enable more effective communication.

The Chairman then reported that there has been contact from HDC regarding local young school leavers who may struggle to enter the job market. Leo Jago is leading a project to attempt to link young

people up with re-opening businesses that may be looking to recruit. The response so far has been positive, but more information is needed.

The Chairman, Clerk and Cllr Goodyear have begun work on a 'Return to Normal' plan. This will be taken to FRC initially and then to Full Council in July.

Finally, the Chairman reported that although the local care homes have been coping well, there have been some problems in sheltered housing with support being withdrawn. The Chairman has investigated and found that there are some problems as wardens have needed to self-isolate. The Helpline have now stepped in to assist and the Chairman has requested that they are kept informed of the situation.

7. HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

a) Local Plan Consultation results

The Chairman reported that around 50% of the responses were in relation to the proposed Mayfield development. Only 36 of the responses were in support. He went on to explain that HDC has requested a report on infrastructure delivery and settlement sustainability with an analysis of what will be needed if development goes ahead. Woodmancote and Shermanbury Parish Councils have also requested to be included in the discussion as they use Henfield's facilities. This would provide a consistent response. HDC require this report by the 3rd of July. He asked all committees and outside bodies representatives to consider what may be required and suggested a potential transport plan as an example. He recommended the assumption that a further 500 homes may be built and to also assume that if it goes ahead, Mayfield would be self-contained and should not be part of our considerations. Cllr Kendall asked whether travel to and from other parishes should be considered. The Chairman responded that it should and gave an example of a cycle route to Sussex Prairies, which would cross parish boundaries.

8. MOTION: TO APPROVE AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2019/20 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

The Clerk explained that the figure shown in box 8 at the last meeting was not correct. This was caused by a payment that was made on the last day of the financial year but was not confirmed as processed until the day after. This was due to a bank error. The issue was picked up in the reconciliation process for the External Audit. The Internal Auditor has confirmed that the correct figure is £248,397.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Kendall, **SECONDED** by Cllr Goodyear and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the amendment to the 2019/20 Accounting Statements.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(A) Finance Risk & Change Governance

Cllr Goodyear to report:

i) Summary of £23,308.97 – Period 1st May to 31st May 2020
Noted by councillors.

ii) Select Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Check
Cllr Jemmett selected AIRS cost of consultant.

iii) Return to 'normal working' plan

Cllr Goodyear confirmed that she is looking at how to transition gradually as some restrictions might ease but other may be in place long term. Cllr Goodyear asked for any comments or suggestions to be sent to her before the next FRC meeting. The plan will be brought to Full Council in July.

Cllr Kendall confirmed that the individual grievance process is taking longer than he expected. He produced a report with a variety of suggested responses. A decision was reached and discussed at a Zoom meeting with the former Deputy Clerk on the 19th May. There has since

been a revised response issued and a further reply received. Cllr Kendall stressed the need to maintain confidentiality.

(B) Plans Advisory

Cllr Goodyear reported that there has been an overall drop in the number of applications, but that some of those being received appeared to be opportunistic in nature.

Motion: To approve the Plans Advisory Committee meeting the agent of developer Taylor Wimpey for a without prejudice pre-application discussion when Coronavirus restrictions are lifted.

The Chairman reminded council that this plan is for 500-800 homes north east of Henfield. The proposal came too late to be considered for the Neighbourhood Plan. He also reminded Council that it is the Council's policy for the Plans Advisory Committee to meet with developers on a 'without prejudice' basis, but that Full Council's approval is needed.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Goodyear, **SECONDED** by Cllr Perry and **VOTED 10 in favour with 1 abstention** to approve the Plans Advisory Committee meeting the agent of developer Taylor Wimpey for a without prejudice pre-application discussion when Coronavirus restrictions are lifted.

Cllr Morgan then commented that it was pleasing to see that the Sandy Lane application was refused.

The Chairman stated that he was pleased that Cllr Lionel Barnard intervened on an application for a new bus stop in Small Dole at the Whiteoaks site. Cllr Goodyear commented that it appears that another house is being built on this site. Cllr Morgan confirmed that this is subject to an enforcement enquiry.

(C) Open Spaces

Cllr Perry reported that although there have been no recent meetings, there has been lots of activity particularly on footpaths. She thanked the Parish Office and Works Officers for continuing to assist. She also reported that there had been a request for yoga classes to take place on the Kings Field which had been approved on the basis that social distancing rules are adhered to. She also commented that 12-month tree work is being carried out as well as some emergency work needed. She commented that she is pleased to see the trails leaflets progressing. She is concerned about the Borrer bank planting given recent drought conditions and this is being monitored. John Willis is continuing to water the trees.

Cllr Morgan asked whether permission for yoga had been given without payment agreed, on the basis that if a business is making money then the Parish Council should charge for the facility. Cllr Perry confirmed that the classes were taking place on a voluntary donation basis, so payment had not been requested. Cllr Kendall asked whether he could contact the Leisure Centre to suggest that they can hold fitness classes outdoors for their existing members and Cllr Donoghue asked whether another business that she is a client of may also be given permission to operate outdoors. The Chairman responded positively by saying that there is a need to be flexible in the current circumstances and that if local businesses are not able to access their usual premises due to restrictions, then Council ought to be supportive.

(D) Village Centre

Cllr Jones thanked the Parish Office and Works Officers for their continuing efforts. She reported that the final payment for the public conveniences has been made and that a damp patch had been reported to the contractor. Re-opening will be discussed at the committee meeting next week. She also reported that quotes are being obtained for resurfacing of the Leisure Centre car park and that Cllr Morgan had met with contractors to discuss requirements. The cemetery extension project is also progressing and quotes are expected shortly for the laying of pathways. Finally, she commented that the planting in the library car park was looking good and she has expressed her thanks to Liz Taylor.

(E) Museum

Cllr Donoghue reported that the Museum appears to be benefitting from the lockdown with greatly increase online engagement on social media. The Costume Curator and Mr Rob Gordon (Chairman of the Friends of Henfield Museum) have been actively sharing material and there has been a lot of interest. She also reported that a generous member of the public has offered to fund a Museum website, which will enhance the content on the Parish Council website and be more interactive. Mr Gordon and the Curator have been working with the member of the public on the site and it will be ready shortly. Consideration will be given to the launch at the next meeting with a view to encouraging more physical visits. A new leaflet is also ready to be printed.

Cllr Donoghue also reported that there had been some discussion at the recent Museum meeting regarding the proposed extension to the Henfield Hall for the benefit of the theatre group. The committee and Curator have been requesting additional storage for many years and there was disappointment expressed that the Museum had not been consulted or considered with regards to the planned extension. The Chairman confirmed that the grant submission had gone ahead without consultation although it had more recently come to light that the grant to fund the extension is only available to income generating bodies, which the Museum is not. On speaking to the Hall treasurer, he found out that they have had to move quickly due to time constraints, but that he was also surprised the Council had not even been informed by the Parish Council's Henfield Hall outside body representative. He agreed that there is a need to consider everyone's interests and suggested a meeting to discuss with relevant parties, particularly in light of the IDP work being requested by HDC. Cllr Goodyear asked if Cllr Donoghue would support having a representative of the Museum on the Hall committee, as the Museum is a permanent tenant. Cllr Donoghue responded that she was denied access to a recent Hall meeting; the reason given being that the Parish Council already has a representative. Cllr Donoghue also commented that Leo Jago is on both committees and that he did not know of the extension plans either.

Action Point: Cllr Donoghue and the Chairman to approach Henfield Hall for a meeting to discuss.

(F) Commons

Cllr Sharp reported that there has not been a recent meeting but invited any questions. The Clerk asked whether the hole on the Common has been repaired. Cllr Sharp confirmed that it has, along with the necessary landscaping, although the grass seed sown may not be successful due to the drought conditions.

The Chairman commented that the main footpath entrance is quite overgrown with nettles. The Clerk commented that the Works Officer has already dealt with that issue. Cllr Donoghue asked whether there had been any problems with anti-social behaviour, Cllr Sharp responded that there had not been any reported and that visitors appeared to be social distancing successfully.

(G) Neighbourhood Plan

Motion: To ask Horsham District Council to consider a postal ballot for the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum, once the Decision Statement has been agreed.

The Chairman clarified that if HDC agree to a postal ballot, this would allow the process to proceed. He stated that he believes residents are already well informed on the Neighbourhood Plan and that a postal ballot could be carried out effectively. Cllr Kendall asked whether this was allowed legally. The Chairman confirmed that Mr Osgood has checked with HDC and it is. The Clerk commented that there are several other parishes in the same situation.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Jones, **SECONDED** by Cllr Rickard and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to ask Horsham District Council to consider a postal ballot for the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum, once the Decision Statement has been agreed.

ACTION POINT: The Clerk to approach HDC to consider a postal ballot once the Decision Statement has been agreed.

Motion: To formally approach Horsham District Council for guidance on the position regarding potential funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy, should the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum be postponed until May 2021.

The Chairman explained that if the postal ballot is not permitted, he feels Henfield should not be penalised by having the lower rate of CIL applied.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Rickard, **SECONDED** by Cllr Goodyear and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to formally approach Horsham District Council for guidance on the position regarding potential funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy, should the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum be postponed until May 2021.

Action Point: The Clerk to approach HDC for guidance on the position regarding CIL.

Cllr Shaw commented that the cemetery is looking lovely and that Grasstex are doing a good job. The Clerk commented that there was an area that has been missed, but that this has been reported.

The Chairman explained that next month there will be an additional meeting of the Kings Field and George Rothery Charities in order to sign off the minutes from the AGMs.

10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 7th July 2020 at 2:30pm

Meeting Closed at 3.57pm.

Appendix 1 - £23,308.97 Expenditure - Period 1st May to 31st May 2020

Mrs P Sanders (High Street Flower Bed Maintenance)	84.00
PMW Ltd (Website Hosting 1/5/20 to 30/4/20)	255.00
Wallgate Ltd (Service Contract 1/5/20 to 30/4/20)	550.00
WC Hire Ltd (Storage Container Hire)	214.28
The Henfield Hall (Mayfield Public Meeting)	100.00
Southern Beeches Ltd (Fell Two Dead Elms)	165.00
Zoom Video Communications (Monthly Subscription)	11.99
Grasstex Ltd (Cemetery Maintenance)	580.00
Amazon Web Services (Back-up Services)	6.94
Bank Charges (Barclays)	14.35
Pow Wow Now (Conferencing Charges)	38.70
The Henfield Hall (Quarterly Rent/Maintenance)	3,700.00
HDC (Public Conveniences Rates)	1,871.25
Litter Warden Salaries (May)	683.52
Salaries (May)	8,374.50
LGPS (Pension Contribution)	433.77
Premier Office (UK) Ltd (Photocopy Charge 19/4/20 to 20/5/20)	30.18
HDC (Rothery Pavilion Rates)	276.48
HDC (Cemetery Rates)	475.43
EDF Energy (Public Conveniences Electricity)	73.00
Shell Garage (Petrol and Diesel)	59.93
BT (April Phone Charges)	104.99
Legal & General (Pension Contribution)	420.25
Mulberry & Co (Final Internal Audit 2019/20)	135.00
HDC (Dog Bin Emptying)	80.36
The Henfield Hall (Final Maintenance Charge 2019/20)	965.58
Deli Supplies Ltd (Paper Towels)	19.99
Budgens (Various)	18.04
Land Registry (Official Search)	14.00
Car Parts & Accessories (Van Tail Light)	1.44
KCOM (Domain Registration 2020 to 2022)	101.00
Green Manor Building Ltd (Public Conveniences Final Account)	3,000.00
AIRS (Cost of Consultant)	450.00

Transfer of Internal Funds in May 2020

£15,000.00 transferred on 21st May 2020 from the HSBC Accounts to the Barclays Current Account.