

HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of Henfield Parish Council held on Tuesday 1st September 2020
at 7:00pm via Zoom Conferencing.**

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

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager), Mrs B Samrah (Administrator), Cllr L Barnard (West Sussex County Council (WSCC) and two members of the public.

MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS 'INTERESTS

The Chairman declared a personal interest in item 4 d) as a Trustee of the Haven.

2. APOLOGIES

Cllrs N Farrell and N Stevens.

The Chairman asked all to join in one minute's silence in remembrance of Keith Wilkins, District Councillor for Henfield from 2005-2011 and Paul Protopapadakis, Member of the Henfield Club and Trustee of the Haven, who both passed away recently.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7th JULY 2020

Approved, to be signed tomorrow in the Parish Office.

4. MATTERS ARISING

a) S106 update regarding the Henfield Hall and Leisure Centre

The Clerk confirmed that he chased progress this morning. Cllr Morgan confirmed that he believes the documents has been signed but are awaiting being dated.

b) Showcase Tour and B P Guild support

Cllr Simmonds confirmed that the BP Guild should have plenty of volunteers to help.

c) Covid 19 update

Belinda Samrah confirmed that calls to the Helpline have fallen to approximately one per day, the Budgens orders have now stopped, and residents are being encouraged to venture out and use relatives to assist. The Chairman confirmed that Belinda will now be in the Parish Office more but will continue to answer calls to the Helpline. We would also intend to switch resources and increase hours on the Helpline if needed to support a spike in Covid19.

d) Henfield Haven reopening on 13th July

The Chairman confirmed that the Haven has been well attended since reopening on 13th July. Excellent weather has helped and the CIO have been stunned by the generosity and support of our residents. There have been many positive comments and some of the high needs residents are starting to return, particularly on Wednesdays when music therapy in the garden is being offered. So far the cafe has been run entirely by volunteers but there will be paid staff from the 1st of September. Impact Initiatives have now employed a solicitor as no conclusion has been reached on the division of assets, such as the mini-bus and furniture. There has been positive support from WSCC leader Paul Marshall, although one of the other officers at WSCC has sought to intervene by writing to our Chairman on Impact's behalf. There is a board meeting of the Trustees on Thursday afternoon, following which a settlement proposal will be made to Impact Initiatives. The Chairman has also queried WSCC's

treatment of a £50,000 grant made to Impact in support of the Haven. He has asked for a response from WSCC before Paul Marshall's next visit on the 7th of September.

Cllr Potts invited Horsham District Councillor (HDC) Roger Noel to report on a recent fundraising event. He commented that the flamenco evening at Sussex Prairies raised approximately £700 for the Haven which will be passed on shortly once approved by the branch office. Cllr Noel thanked all who attended and in return was thanked for organising the successful event.

e) Code of Conduct amendments

A revised version was circulated prior to the meeting. However, Cllr Morgan noticed a typing error stating appendix 6 instead of appendix C.

Action Point: The Operations Manager to correct and recirculate the Code of Conduct.

f) Local Plan response to Horsham District Council

The response has now been sent.

g) The sandpit to be included on the Recreation & Open Spaces agenda

This issue will be discussed at the October meeting of the Recreation and Open Spaces committee. The local PCSO has also been informed and is including the area on her patrols.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's announcements.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

Cllr Roger Noel requested a copy of the Local Plan response.

Action Point: The Clerk to send a copy of the Local Plan response to Roger Noel

A member of the public asked the Council to thank Tony Jackson, a former Henfield resident who has now moved away, for all of his involvement at the Haven, Henfield Community Partnership (HCP) and Henfield Hub. The Chairman expressed his thanks on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

6. HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

Cllr Morgan confirmed that there was nothing of note to report.

Cllr Potts confirmed that the Local Plan was progressing and workshops are likely to be held with District Councillors later this month on the various strategic and smaller sites. He also confirmed that there has been more discussion on unitary authorities and more information is expected later in the autumn. Cllr Kendall asked whether introducing unitary authorities is seen as cost saving, Cllr Potts explained it would be expected to generate large savings. Cllr Kendall also asked how it would affect Parish Councils. Cllr Potts replied that greater powers could be given to Parish Councils as a result. Cllr Barnard commented that Horsham, Crawley and Mid Sussex could be joined together and a Mayor appointed, which would remove the need for a Police and Crime Commissioner.

7. WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Cllr Barnard reported that at a recent budget meeting, a deficit of £100 to £200 million is forecast, mainly due to non-payment of Council tax and business rates. He also reported that a new

Deputy Chief Fire Officer is starting this month and Cllr Barnard will be on a task force to look at the control centre. He also commented that the land at Wantley is not for sale, however WSCC is looking at alternative uses for the site.

8. GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER “PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE” – RESPONSE

The Chairman confirmed that the White Paper is currently in a consultation period which will end in October. He recommended responding via SSALC and copying Horsham District Council and our MP. Cllr Stevens has challenged the method used to calculate housing needs and this will form part of the response, as well as the times outlined in an email prepared by the Chairman. **It was agreed** that the Plans Advisory Committee (PAC) would finalise the response which would include the themes expressed in both Cllr Stevens’ and the Chairman’s emails.

Action Point: The Chairman to finalise a response with the PAC committee.

9. SAFE TRANSPORT ROUTES PROPOSAL

The Chairman explained that during the Local Plan response, it was identified that there is a need to consider all of the routes around the village, in particular for walkers, horse riders and cyclists. He suggested the formation of a working group and asked that committees discuss which of their members may be able to join. He suggested that the working group, rather than creating new footpaths or bridleways, consider improving or upgrading existing routes wherever possible and hoped that proposals or recommendations can be brought to Full Council in time to include in any possible budget considerations for next year. He intends to promote this idea and ask for volunteers from the horse riding, cycling, running and walking community groups to join as part of the working group via BN5 magazine. Cllr Kendall recommended caution, particularly as there will be budget constraints and that any proposals may not fit with the Parish Council’s overall plans. The Chairman confirmed that the working groups will be non-voting and can only provide recommendations. Cllr Shaw recommended that they are promoted as a consultation group only, to which the Chairman agreed.

Action Point: Committees to consider which of their members would be available to join a consultation group.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(A) Finance Risk & Change Governance

i) Summary of £14,565.51 - Period 1st August to 31st August 2020

Noted by Council.

ii) Select Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Check (June, July & August)

Cllr Potts selected Stonepit Nursery for June.

Cllr Sharp selected Technomek for July.

Cllr Potts selected Legal and General for August.

iii) Return to ‘Normal Working’ Plan

Cllr Goodyear reported that works to the Parish Office are continuing, with screens and sanitising stations being ordered. The intention is for only two Councillors to be present in the office at any one time once it re-opens. Councillors will need to ring in advance to check whether they are able to visit. An appointment system will be available for members of the public. All visits will be logged.

iv) Parish Office Workload and Staffing

Cllr Goodyear explained that the situation with Covid 19 has provided an opportunity to

re-evaluate Parish Office roles and workload. Rebecca has now been appointed as Operations Manager, dealing with the office email account, website, social media and cemetery. Belinda has been appointed as Administrator, to focus on agendas and minutes, correspondence and continuing with her Neighbourhood Plan and Helpline roles as needed. The Clerk will focus on finance, strategy and projects.

v) Community Facilities Consultation & Review Meetings in October 2020

Cllr Goodyear explained that, driven by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan review, it was felt there was a need to pool community interests and priorities in order to facilitate working together. Two meetings have been scheduled, one for sporting groups and the other for community buildings, and invitations have been sent. Cllr Simmonds asked whether the Scouts had been included and the Chairman confirmed that they have.

(B) Plans Advisory

Cllr Goodyear reported that the main focus has been the White Paper as well as Taylor Wimpey's proposal to develop the land north east of Wantley. They have been invited to attend a without prejudice Zoom meeting with the PAC on the 17th September.

(C) Recreation & Open Spaces

Cllr Perry reported that there was a meeting in July and that the re-opening of playgrounds went smoothly. She and Cllr Farrell have also reviewed what work may be needed to develop the playgrounds in future. She also reported that there have been some concerns regarding damage to trees and litter in the Sandpit, but that this will be discussed further in October. There has also been a review of the Events Application and Guidance document for use of Council Land. She reported that the Memorial field has been badly affected by the recent weather, and that there is a meeting to discuss with the Football Club and Cricket Club tomorrow. She also asked for the Council's support to promote the Keep Britain Tidy Litter Fortnight 11th to 27th September, and to potentially borrow some equipment.

The Chairman also reported that the two trail leaflets have now been signed off and are awaiting printing. PMW are working on a double page article and front page for the October edition of BN5 magazine.

(D) Village Amenities

Cllr Jones reported that a new path lay-out for the cemetery extension has been agreed, and a contractor appointed. It is hoped that work will start in October. She also reported that the re-opening of the public conveniences went well, and positive comments have been received. The opening of the bus shelter will be discussed at the meeting next week.

(E) Museum

Cllr Donoghue reported that the Museum committee met last week. The assistant curator has completed a thorough risk assessment and work is now taking place in the identified areas to enable the museum to re-open, hopefully in mid-September. It will be a soft launch, and she asked Council to note that there may be a change in opening days or hours depending on volunteer availability. She also reported that the museum now has its own website; there is a link to it from the Parish Council's museum page. The museum will continue to use the Parish Council website for formalities such as committee meeting information and important documents, but that the dedicated museum website will focus more on the collections. The new website is now 'live,' however a formal launch is planned for the future.

Cllr Simmonds asked about the new leaflets. Cllr Donoghue confirmed that these have not yet been printed as the usual venues to display them are not yet open, and there may be changes needed such as opening times.

(F) **Commons**

Cllr Sharp reported that there has been a recent meeting, and that the main focus was horse trails. He is hoping that once these are established, particularly in the North Common Wood, that there will be less damage to the footpaths.

(G) **Neighbourhood Plan**

i) Government response to a letter from Andrew Griffith MP and a proposal to write to NALC concerning a postal referendum

A response and a formal request for a postal ballot has been sent to SSALC and acknowledged. This was also copied in to HDC and the local MP.

11. **REPORTS OF MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON EXTERNAL BODIES**

Cllr Donoghue reported that she has sent a letter of support to the headteacher at St Peter's School, as pupils are returning to school on Monday. She also reported that she is working with Sue Willis on re-establishing a business group. More than 200 local business have been identified and contacted. 30 are keen to be involved and six are taking a leading role and will be meeting shortly. Cllr Kendall asked whether the HCP had met recently. Cllr Goodyear confirmed that the AGM is taking place in October via Zoom.

Cllr Jemmett reported that the Youth Club has published its annual accounts and have managed to balance their finances for another year which is encouraging. He also commented that there has been a suggestion that the Parish Council should be doing more to support young people. The Chairman commented that they would be welcome to present ideas. Cllr Simmonds commented that young people are often left to make their own entertainment and that the young people he has encountered on bikes around the village are overall courteous and careful not to cause any damage.

Action Point: Cllr Jemmett to raise how the Parish Council could support young people at the Youth Club AGM.

Cllr Kendall reported that the Leisure Centre has reopened the gym successfully and has been holding some classes on the Kings Field. They are also planning to open the soft play area shortly. They have received a generous grant of £25,000 from HDC thanks to Cllrs Morgan and Potts, and they are monitoring income and expenditure carefully. They are also pleased with the newly resurfaced car park, which so far seems to have addressed the ponding and flooding issues.

The Chairman then commented that it may be time to switch the Link Road lights back on.

Action Point: The Clerk to arrange switching the Link Road lights back on.

12. **SUSSEX POLICE REPORT**

There was nothing to report.

13. **CORRESPONDENCE**

i) Motorcycle Noise

The Council noted that the local MP Andrew Griffith is attempting to address the issue of motorcycle noise.

The Chairman also reported that the Henfield Hub has announced its plans to close at the end of this year. He has contacted Digby Stevenson to offer our help with archiving any valuable resources and Steve Bailey will contact Cllr Goodyear with anything that may be needed by the Parish Council.

14. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

Cllr Sharp asked that the Council consider looking after trees that are on unadopted land and requested that a policy is put in place to address issues that arise, particularly when local residents want works to be carried out on them. Cllr Morgan commented that trees do need to be maintained and that this is difficult if there is no owner to give permission, however the HDC Tree Officer will address issues with any trees in the Conservation area and if a tree falls on a footpath or road this would be dealt with by WSCC. He also warned against setting a precedent by seeking to adopt unadopted sites and trees. The Chairman also commented that in order to progress this, a map of all the trees this would apply to would have to be in place, which would be extremely time consuming and difficult to produce.

Action Point: The Administrator to include trees on unadopted land on the agenda for the next Recreation and Open Spaces meeting in October.

Cllr Shaw reported that he attended a SSALC training programme on 'Parish Councils as Employers' and has sent his thoughts to Cllrs Goodyear, Perry and Donoghue. His overall reflection was that the Council should cherish its excellent relationship with the Clerk, and that any work carried out to become a better employer is time well spent.

15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 6th October 2020 at 7:00pm via Zoom Conferencing.

Meeting Closed at 8.35pm.