

## **HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

Meeting of **Henfield Parish Council** held on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021**  
at **7:00pm** via Zoom Conferencing.

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

**In attendance:** Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager), Mrs B Samrah (Parish Administrator), Cllr L Barnard (West Sussex County Council-WSCC), Cllr R Noel (Horsham District Council- HDC), Mr P Crowe (Henfield Community Partnership-HCP) and seven members of the public.

The Chairman proposed, and all those at the meeting observed a minute's silence in remembrance of Captain Sir Tom Moore who sadly passed away from COVID 19 today. He commented that he was an inspiration to us all.

The Chairman then welcomed all those in attendance and explained that the members of the public present would be invited to speak in the Open Forum section. He also asked all those present to note that the meeting is being live streamed on Facebook.

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

None.

#### **2. APOLOGIES**

Cllr C Simmonds.

#### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021**

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

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

##### **a) Guidance notes and application for funding sent to organisations contained on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan**

This has been actioned. The Chairman has spoken to a representative of the Scouts who confirmed that they are delighted to have been awarded £10,000 from the Parish Council and that this sum will get them over the line for the build project. The Chairman also confirmed that he has offered to donate some outdoor lighting from the Parish Council to the project for the rear of the new scout building, subject to Village Amenities support. These are left over from the Link Road and Youth Club projects and are currently unused in storage.

Cllr Morgan queried that the guidance circulated implied that funds would be released prior to the completion of projects. The Chairman explained that funds may be needed in order to complete projects, but that they would not be realised until a final invoice had been received.

##### **b) Chairs to send Annual Reports to the Operations Manager**

All reports have now been received.

#### **5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman commented that he was sad to see that the tenants of The Plough public house are moving on and that the family that run The White Hart are retiring. He hopes that there will soon be new tenants.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

## **OPEN FORUM**

Cllr Noel introduced himself as a HDC Councillor and explained that he regularly attends Council meetings as he has an interest in local planning applications that may be an abuse of planning regulations, in particular those relating to the conversion of agricultural buildings into dwellings.

A 16 year old member of the public explained that he was in attendance to request cooperation with the Council and to ask them to consider allowing mountain bikes to continue using the area north of the Common known as the Sandpit, or Henfield Bowl. He has written a letter, a suggested notice and a petition with 86 signatures of support, all of which were circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. He explained that bike trails had been in use there for over 10 years and that since the summer he and his friends have been very careful to clear any litter and have stopped using the driveway to the south side to access it, although he could not be held responsible for the many other children and adults that also use the area. He also pointed out that local residents appear to be using the site to fly tip and dump garden waste and that there had been a recent incident where a resident had taken photographs and videos of the children without consent and threatened them with arrest, which he and the children's parents were very unhappy about. He also confirmed that he has made contact with several adults willing to support the proposal and who have also offered to help with organisation, safety inspections and risk assessments should permission be granted.

A local resident thanked Mackenzie and explained that he supports his proposal and that he and his family had also used the area for mountain biking in the last 3-4 years, but even more so in the last year due to the lockdown. He agreed there could be an impact on local households but offered to work in collaboration in order to find a way forward. He explained that it is not an eyesore, is hidden away and could be viewed in a similar way to the skate park as an invaluable resource for outdoor activity. He added that he was surprised and impressed by the young people's diligence collecting litter and keeping the area tidy.

A resident of Henfield Common explained that there has been an increase in construction at the sandpit in the last few months, that a wooden structure had been erected and deep holes dug. He raised an objection to the noise of the digging and pointed out that he feels there have been numerous breaches of Council guidance for the use of this area and that it has become very muddy. He expressed concern that if the current usage continues, other potential users such as dog walkers may not feel able to use the area. He agreed that there had been a reduction in the use of his private driveway to access the area after he raised the matter.

Cllr Shaw asked whether this resident was objecting specifically to the more recent increase in usage and would be happy if it returned to previous levels, prior to the Coronavirus lockdowns and school closures. The resident confirmed that he has only lived there since November and does not want to prevent young people using it, but just objects to recent increase in construction and noise and also asked that flora and fauna is given a chance to recover in this green space.

The Chairman asked how many youngsters were there at one time. The young resident confirmed that in his group up to 5 or 6 at a time. He also confirmed that he had asked his friends to stop construction work in the area while the matter is considered by Council, and he has also asked them to walk with their cycles on the footpath rather than ride.

The Chairman then confirmed that the matter would be discussed fully at the Recreation and Open Spaces (ROS) meeting next Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February. He then proposed, and **it was agreed** to move item 11c on the agenda to directly following the Open Forum, so that those who only have an interest in this item could then leave the meeting if they wished.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

Cllr Perry, Chairman of the ROS committee thanked all those who contributed and explained that the committee would be mindful and respectful of all the points raised. This area has been under discussion since the Summer 2020 and the issue of litter was successfully addressed with notices put up and a significant improvement noted. She also explained that there would not be a quick decision as there are many legal, safety and insurance issues to consider.

Cllr Potts added that these types of facilities are vital for physical and mental wellbeing and that this area is a unique space that has been used for a very long time for this type of activity. He cautioned that the legal and insurance issues could be costly and complicated.

Cllr Morgan confirmed that the land is owned by Henfield Parish Council (HPC) and does not form part of Henfield Common. He commented that there have been numerous incidents there over the years and that the skate park had been installed partly to attempt to divert the use. He also mentioned that an area of land between the football pavilion and school had previously been designated for a BMX track but had been closed again due to safety concerns. He commented that he has received a complaint from residents of Furners Mead regarding the riding of bicycles on the footpath leading to the Sandpit, and that this matter is being dealt with by WSCC.

The Chairman summarised by saying that all views would be considered and agreed that having places to exercise is vital for physical and mental health, but that local green spaces are for the whole community. He stated that construction work has advanced a lot recently, but he is glad that all digging and tree cutting has stopped for the time being whilst we all consider the way forward.

Cllr Stevens commented that this area has not yet been designated as a 'local green space', it is a proposal put forward in the Neighbourhood Plan which is due to be taken to referendum in May. Cllr Morgan offered to investigate whether a 'change of use' planning application would be needed in order to apply an alternative definition for the use of this area.

**It was resolved** that all views would be taken to ROS for further discussion and decisions on the way forward will be fed back to interested parties.

Four members of the public left the meeting.

## **6. HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Morgan confirmed that there is little to report. Cabinet is recommending a £5 increase on Band D Council Tax and the 2021 Census will be taking place in March. There is still no final decision on the Magnolia tree in the library car park but District Council officials were receptive to Parish Council concerns and desire to save it. He also confirmed that there are still business support grants available.

Cllr Potts invited any questions on the Local Plan and explained that there has been significant progress on the short-term action plan for carbon reduction which includes increased planting and biodiversity commitments. Wilder Horsham is now on social media.

## **7. WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Barnard confirmed that he will follow up the issue relating to cycling on footpaths. He also stated that WSCC has received a ten-page letter congratulating them on their COVID response. He explained he recently led a task force looking at the new fire service control room which is being relocated to Surrey, where they will join with East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue. He is meeting with Rampion 2 tomorrow to discuss the project. WSCC are otherwise concentrating on budget issues and the 4.99% increase recommended by Cabinet.

## 8. COVID 19 UPDATE

The Chairman confirmed that Henfield Medical Centre has been approved to commence vaccinations with effect from this week. They are anticipating a delivery of 800 doses of the Astra Zeneca vaccine on Thursday and following a small trial run, the bulk of vaccinations will be carried out on Friday and over the weekend. Appointments will be shared with Steyning residents. A small number of doses are being held back to vaccinate housebound residents. The Chairman expressed his thanks to Cllrs Jones, Perry and Donoghue who have been making telephone appointments and explained that as the process progresses, they are hoping to make more use of text messaging with the lower age groups. In order for clinical staff to focus on clinical work, there may be a need to fill more administration assistant roles at the Medical Centre, but this will be on a paid basis and a DBS check will be needed. If anyone does not want to be paid, the Medical Centre has confirmed that the equivalent amount will be donated to the Haven. Overall, 1,743 Henfield residents have been vaccinated as of today; this represents all the available over 80's and 72% of the over 75s. A mass vaccination centre has also opened in Brighton but all local residents will have the choice of where to attend. Second doses of the vaccine will be administered in the same place as the first dose, so if you received the first dose at Storrington Medical Centre you should return to Storrington for your second vaccination. Peter Bates has organised the marshalling for the Henfield Medical Centre and will continue to do so. The Chairman proposed and **it was agreed** to write a letter of thanks to the Glebe Surgery in Storrington. Cllr Kendall supported this, stating that they are well organised and friendly. Cllr Jones confirmed that feedback she received on the phone was very positive.

**Action Point: The Chairman to write a letter of thanks to the Glebe surgery in Storrington.**

The Clerk confirmed that Henfield Medical Centre hope that Steyning will be making their own appointment bookings for their residents, but this is yet to be confirmed. He asked Cllr Jones to keep the office updated. The Chairman confirmed that there is a higher proportion of over 70s in Steyning so the share of vaccine may need to alter to allow them to catch up. Cllr Stevens mentioned that he may be able to assist the Medical Centre with their IT/admin roles.

## 9. ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HENFIELD COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP – MR PAUL CROWE

Mr Crowe introduced himself and commented he took over as Chair at the end of 2019. He explained the three objectives of HCP being to improve communications and awareness, increase membership and engagement and to improve sustainability. There has been an increase in activity with BN5 magazine and on social media, as well as separate newsletters for businesses, clubs and associations, for which he thanked and credited Sue Willis. The Care for Carers scheme was co-branded with BN5 magazine and it is hoped that this will continue in conjunction with Henfield Football Club with a celebration planned for local essential workers. HCP has realised that membership is less important than building an online community and during the first lockdown they were able to assist with supporting local businesses to pivot their focus and go online. Sustainable Henfield 2030 (SH2030) has been integrated into HCP and they continue to work together with HCP providing financial and logistical support. HCP have also supported local traders by signing them up to a local traders' group which is becoming more formal and they are now holding regular meetings. It is hoped that by working with HPC and a local design agency, more people can be attracted to the village which will stimulate the local economy. HCP is also assisting with the trails project for Hidden Henfield, funding a carbon reduction survey and building a local recovery and disaster plan. Mr Crowe went on to explain that COVID had highlighted a few issues, including the need to streamline the committee structure. As a limited company they have a board of directors but would like to reduce the number of committee members to promote a sharper focus with more individual accountability. Mr Crowe proposed that the number of Parish Council committee member is reduced from three to one and that he would like this to be actioned in time for the AGM in March. The role of HCP would not be affected. **It was resolved** to include this proposal on the agenda for the next meeting.

**Action Point: The Clerk to include the proposal to reduce the number of Parish Councillors on the HCP committee on the agenda for the next Full Council meeting.**

## **10. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING REVIEW**

Cllr Goodyear confirmed that the Operations Manager had suggested splitting the Annual Parish Meeting into shorter more focused online events as the usual 'in person' meeting could not go ahead in the Henfield Hall due to COVID regulations. The following programme of events was suggested:

- 1<sup>st</sup> March - 'Meet the Chairman' which will include the statutory and formal requirements.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> March - Normal Full Council meeting as scheduled.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> March - 'Outdoors' focusing on the work of ROS and the Commons.
- 4<sup>th</sup> March - 'Village Centre' focusing on amenities, community buildings and the Museum.

Each session will feature a question and answer session at the end and will be live streamed on Facebook. A separate event for Young People will be planned, perhaps later in March. Cllr Goodyear went on to thank the Chairs of each committee for their reports and suggested that a printed version could be displayed in the Parish Office windows, as the usual printed version cannot be left for people to collect in the normal locations such as the library and Haven. Cllr Morgan also suggested displaying in the noticeboard by the bus shelter in the high street.

## **11. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **(A) Finance Risk & Change Governance**

Cllr Goodyear to report.

- a) Summary of £15,606.22 - Period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020  
Noted by Councillors.
- b) Select Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Check (January)  
Cllr Potts selected PMW Ltd - £700.

Cllr Goodyear invited any questions regarding the recent minutes.

### **(B) Plans Advisory**

Cllr Stevens invited any questions on recent minutes.

### **(C) Recreation & Open Spaces**

- a) The Sandpit  
This item was discussed directly following the Open Forum.

Cllr Perry confirmed there was nothing else to report and that the committee is meeting next week.

### **(D) Village Amenities**

Cllr Jones reported that the committee met on 12<sup>th</sup> January and invited questions. She confirmed that five new trees have now been planted in the cemetery extension and the first burial has taken place. She has also attended a meeting to discuss the Magnolia in the library car park and believes that HDC are giving the matter serious consideration.

(E) **Museum**

Cllr Donoghue reported that the next meeting is in two weeks and invited any questions or comments to be passed on for the meeting. The Chairman commented that the online content is very good.

(F) **Commons**

Cllr Sharp reported that at a recent meeting the committee had discussed work on the Park Oak. It was decided to fence the tree to prevent access in case of accidents, and that lower branches would be supported. This work will be carried out by professionals. There will also be some professional signage installed for the new horse trails, the design to fit in with the safe routes project. It was also agreed to leave the Tanyard pond as it is, with Works Officers folding in any overhang as a safety precaution. He then confirmed that there are ongoing issues being investigated by Cllr Morgan with regards to ownership of particular sections of the Commons that appear to have been taken over by private individuals. He invited any questions.

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

Cllr Donoghue confirmed that she is attending a Rampion 2 meeting on Thursday and if any Councillors would like her to raise any issues or questions they need to submit to her before then.

13. **SUSSEX POLICE REPORT**

The Clerk confirmed that there is nothing to report.

14. **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Clerk confirmed that there was no correspondence to consider, but that there had been a lot of emails received by the Parish Office concerning the future of SSALC and WSALC. A report to Council will be prepared when the situation has been resolved. The Chairman agreed and commented that the Parish Council has more urgent issues to consider such as the organisation of vaccinations.

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

Cllr Kendall commented that it is very nice to see the return of Peter Hudson to meetings.

16. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 at 7:00pm via Zoom Conferencing.

**Meeting Closed at 8.41pm.**