**HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

**Meeting of Henfield Parish Council held on Tuesday 1st June 2021 at 7:00pm in the Henfield Hall.**

**Present:** Cllrs M Eastwood (Chairman), E Goodyear, M Morgan, R Shaw, C Simmonds, G Perry,

J Jones, A Sharp, D Jemmett, N Stevens and R Kendall.

**In attendance:** Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager), Cllr Sara Payne (WSCC) and three members of the public.

**MINUTES**

**1.** **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS’ INTERESTS**

None.

**2.** **APOLOGIES**

Cllrs A Rickard, A Donoghue, N Farrell and J Potts.

**3**. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 4th MAY 2021**

Approved, to be signed in the Parish Office after the meeting.

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

1. Outside body representation

The Chairman asked that all representatives contact their outside bodies to ensure that they are aware and inviting them to meetings.

1. Horsham District Council climate change group membership

The Chairman explained that, under his new role as Chair of the Horsham Association of Local Councils (HALC) he was asked to arrange five members for a new climate change group. A sub-committee has been formed of five Councillors from local parishes representing the North and South of the District. Cllr Perry is the alternative member for the South. They will meet separately and feed into the Horsham Group.

**5. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. ‘Toilet Tax’ refund

The Chairman confirmed that £3,742.50 is expected as a refund shortly. Having been through parliament, public conveniences are no longer liable for business rates.

1. Befriending Scheme

Social Prescribing is fully NHS funded and is due to continue at Henfield Medical Centre, however funding will end for the befriending scheme at the end of next year. The Chairman advised that he and Belinda Samrah will be attending a meeting next week to discuss how the befriending scheme might continue as a community activity. A new lead may need to be recruited, however MP Andrew Griffiths recently highlighted an Assurer fund that may be able to provide a grant of up to £5,000.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

**OPEN FORUM**

None of the members of the public wished to speak at the meeting.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

**6. HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Morgan reported that a new leader and cabinet have been appointed. The Neighbourhood Plan is due before Council on 23rd June.

The Chairman congratulated and welcomed Cllr Sarah Payne.

**7. WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Payne asked for Councillors to contact her with any questions and explained that she intends to submit a monthly written report on WSCC activities to the office prior to Council meetings.

The Chairman then reported that there was another fatal accident south of Barrow Hill last weekend and that a local resident has begun a petition to reduce the speed limit from 60mph to 40mph on this stretch of road. He explained that Cllr Payne’s support may be needed and that the Parish Council will also be seeking to discuss with the PCSO in order to seek support from the Police.

**8. COVID 19 UPDATE & RETURN TO FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS**

As of 24th of May, 6,745 residents have had their first Covid jab and 5,591 have had their second. The Medical Centre recently carried out 2,251 vaccinations in one week. The Parish Office is beginning to operate more like normal. The Operations Manager confirmed that the staff are trying to avoid being in the office together for long periods of time.

**9. MOTION: TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £2K FROM GENERAL RESERVES TO PURCHASE A TV, CAMERA AND MICROPHONE EQUIPMENT TO SUPPORT THE LIVE STREAMING OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Cllr Goodyear explained that herself, the Chairman, the Clerk, Operations Manager and Parish Administrator had attended a demonstration of equipment at Woods Mill that enables public attendance at meetings via Zoom as well as the ability to live stream meetings. This would enable the Parish Council to continue with the ability to welcome many more members of the public to meetings and to keep the momentum of public interest and participation, which proved so popular during the pandemic, and that may otherwise be lost due to the recent enforced return to face to face meetings for Councillors and staff. The Chairman confirmed that this would give the public the choice as to whether to attend meetings in person or remotely. This would likely take place initially just for Full Council meetings but may be expanded to committees.

Cllr Stevens warned on the issues of closed session where members of the press and public need to be excluded from meetings, and that recording would need to cease. He also referred to guidance on involvement of minors and vulnerable adults as well as those who do not wish to appear on camera. He will forward this guidance to the Parish Office.

Cllr Perry asked whether office staff were comfortable with the suggestion. The Operations Manager confirmed that they are and that normally two office staff attend each meeting. She also confirmed that public interest is high and that she felt the facility would be welcomed by residents.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Goodyear, **SECONDED** by Cllr Perry **and VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve expenditure of up to £2,000 from general reserves to purchase the equipment necessary for remote attendance and live streaming.

**10. MOTION: TO APPROVE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC EVENTS**

Cllr Goodyear explained that now restrictions are being eased, there are many more events planned in the village, some of which are on Parish Council land. This document has been prepared in order to advise members of the public on the necessary steps and procedures and permits required and also includes links to the Horsham District Council (HDC) website. Cllr Simmonds asked whether mention of timescales would be helpful. Cllr Perry mentioned that it already states three months on the event application form.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Simmonds, **SECONDED** by Cllr Shaw and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the legal requirements and guidelines for public events.

**11. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

Cllr Goodyear to report.

1. Summary of £26,406.87 - Period 1st May to 31st May 2021.

This was noted by Councillors.

1. Select expenditure as the monthly random audit check.

Cllr Morgan selected WSCC Street Lighting - £3,786.65.

Cllr Goodyear explained that there was no meeting in May. The Biodiversity Working Group volunteers will be conducting the phase one habitat survey from now until September. This data can then be mapped onto Parish Online. She also asked Councillors to note that the Clerk is currently self-isolating due to an operation on Friday 4th June and will then be off work sick for two weeks. The Chairman stated that all wish him well.

**(B) Plans Advisory**

Cllr Stevens invited questions on recent minutes, there were none.

**(C) Henfield Neighbourhood Plan**

1. Neighbourhood Plan results and next steps.

Cllr Stevens explained that the Neighbourhood Plan was approved by 90.53% of voters at the recent referendum. It is now down to HDC to ‘make’ the plan which is expected to take place on the 23rd June. There will then be a six-week period for objections for potential judicial review.

The Chairman commented that the Sandy Lane appeal is taking place on the 30th June.

**(D) Recreation & Open Spaces**

Cllr Perry reported that no decision has been made on the Sandpit and that the issue will be further discussed at the next meeting. In the meantime, an update was issued on the website and social media for concerned residents. She also reported that she has met with WSCC verge management team in order to discuss wildflower planting and that there have been several requests for tree planting for various groups and residents in order to commemorate both the pandemic and the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. Tree wardens have met in order to discuss potential locations and this will also be discussed further at the next committee meeting.

**(E) Village Amenities**

Cllr Jones reported that new planters are in place in the Village Square and that since installation the new bus shelter shutters have been vandalised twice. CCTV will be installed shortly covering the bus shelter and public conveniences. Cllr Stevens asked that the Indian Bean Tree in the village square is inspected for safety. Cllr Morgan stated that the HDC Tree officer inspected it and work was carried out in 2019, prior to the Parish Council taking the lease on the area. He will forward the report to the Parish Office. Any further work would need permission from HDC as it is a conservation area.

**(F) Museum**

Cllr Jones reported that the main topic under discussion at a recent meeting was digitalisation of maps and documents in the collection and that outsourcing is being considered as well as a volunteer led project.

1. Strategic Alignment Working Group.

The Chairman and Cllr Donghue met with Peter Shepherd to discuss formation of a working group (as the Hall are currently working on their strategic plan) particularly to address the issue of the space concern for the Museum. It was suggested that three Hall representatives, three from Parish Council and three from the Museum meet to discuss the planned changes. This will shortly be put to the Hall committee.

**(G) Commons**

Cllr Sharp reported that a pipe has been fitted to contain the underground stream on the Common and that hopefully there will be no more subsidence or holes appearing. Cllr Jemmett reported that he had been told that there is a lot of Water Drop Hemlock spreading on the Common which is poisonous. Cllr Sharp agreed but stated that no work is necessary to remove it as many wild plants are poisonous and people don’t tend to eat them.

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

Cllr Perry reported that the university students had been pleased with the results from the Carbon Reduction survey circulated by SH2030 and the Parish Council on their behalf and they will be making a poster and flyer. She also thanked the Council for the loan of posts for the nature trail.

Cllr Stevens reported that the Hall is slowly re-opening and that there is an initial version of a new business plan. The Hall are also working on a new charitable status and constitution. Cllr Simmonds asked about jumble sales as the BP Guild raise a lot of money for the village this way. Cllr Stevens commented that there was some resistance to jumble sales as they are often booked a long time in advance and the Hall could profit more from other events such as wedding receptions. It is possible that jumble sales may be able to resume but a limited number and with booking only possible three to four months in advance. No decision has been made yet.

Cllr Kendall reported that the Leisure Centre fully reopened mid-May and is doing well. The soft play area is fully booked weeks in advance. There are some concerns regarding the roof and a survey is needed.

Cllr Jones reported from the Clarkes Mead Trust that the new Scout building now has draft approval from HDC with stringent environmental constraints.

Cllr Shaw reported that the Haven will reopen for high needs care on Monday and Wednesday from the 5th July. The Thursday Club will also resume.

The Chairman confirmed that he has now received a response to his letter from HDC leader Paul Clarke regarding the delay to the Local Plan and nature recovery networks. He will circulate this tomorrow but commented that his initial impression is that it doesn’t seem to contain many answers, which is extremely disappointing.

**13. PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES**

The Chairman confirmed that there were no particular activities to report but that the Clerk had met with the PCSO who was aware of the current issues with anti-social behaviour.

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

None.

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

Tuesday 6th July 2021 at 7:00pm in the Henfield Hall.

**Meeting Closed at 8.05pm.**