

HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

**Meeting of Henfield Parish Council
held on Tuesday 2nd November 2021 at 7:00pm in the Henfield Hall.**

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

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager - OP), Cllr Sarah Payne (West Sussex County Council - WSCC) and two members of the public.

MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS 'INTERESTS

None.

2. APOLOGIES

Cllr N Farrell.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 5th OCTOBER 2021

Approved, signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Cllr Stevens commented that he was unable to attend the previous meeting due to a hospital visit.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Community Facilities review

The Chairman explained that he has met with the sports clubs in the village and will meet with the rest of the clubs and organisations tomorrow evening. The purpose is to check that the Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) is current and to note any changes. The review is also helpful for 2022/3 budget setting and to understand the priorities in the village.

b) Local Plan update

The Chairman commented that there is no further news. All new build applications have been frozen while Horsham District Council (HDC) produce a forward plan in response to the Natural England letter regarding water neutrality. Chichester and Crawley Districts are also affected.

The Chairman also reminded Councillors regarding Remembrance events and asked that as many as possible attend the parade on Sunday 14th November which starts at 9:10am at the War Memorial.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

A member of the public thanked the Parish Council for their support for his proposal to create official access to the Downslink from behind the Guide Hut but expressed his disappointment at WSCC refusing permission. He commented that the unofficial sloping path has been used unofficially for 45 years and believes that the access should either be made safe or closed. He also stated a member of the public has recently fallen and wondered whether WSCC would be liable for claims in the case of injury.

The Chairman explained that despite a lot of work from the Parish Office obtaining quotes and guidance, WSCC had stated towards the end of the application process that the gradient of the slope was too steep to provide disabled access and that this was the reason for the refusal. He also thanked the member of the public for suggesting the project as the Parish Council had felt it was a good idea and worked hard to deliver it.

Cllr Payne offered to investigate the issue and assist where possible, perhaps pursue alternatives.

Action Point: The Clerk to send Cllr Payne details of the project to enable her to investigate.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

6. HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

Cllr Potts reported that he had nothing to add to the Chairman's response regarding the Local Plan. He also commented that neither RPS nor Budgens have appealed against the planning decision regarding inappropriate signage. He will be looking closely to ensure that the enforcement conditions are met.

Cllr Morgan stated it is important to be alert to any breaches of planning regulations. He also reported that the food waste trial is going well and it is hoped that the scheme will be rolled out across the district.

7. WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

A report from Cllr Payne was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Cllr Jones asked how WSCC is going to find the number of required qualified staff to implement the Mental Health Support in Schools programme and what their level of expertise will be. Cllr Payne said she would investigate further.

The Chairman said that there was a useful and informative link in the report regarding reporting of potholes and asked that this is shared with the public on social media. Cllr Perry also asked for the 'Life you want to Lead' survey to also be shared.

Cllr Potts commented that WSCC also need to prioritise drainage as well as potholes.

Action Point: The Operations Manager to share the information and link regarding potholes and the 'Life you want to Lead' survey on Facebook.

8. MOTION: TO APPROVE UP TO £1K IN FUNDING TO HART TO PURCHASE TWO PROTECTIVE WALL BOXES TO MOVE DEFIBRILLATORS OUTSIDE

Cllr Jones explained that although there are five defibrillators in the High Street (and many more around the village), only the one on the outside wall of Stokes is available 24 hours a day. HART is proposing to position the devices that are inside the library and the White Hart (as those with the most restrictive opening hours) to an outside wall so that they are more accessible. The devices are accessed by calling 999 and asking for the code to unlock the box.

The Chairman asked the Parish Office to ensure that the project is publicised once the devices are in place so that people know the location and how to access them and noted that the locations for the devices could also be included on the trail website.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Morgan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Simmons and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve up to £1,000 in funding to HART to purchase two protective wall boxes to move the defibrillators outside.

Action Point: The Clerk to inform HART.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(A) Finance Risk & Change Governance

a) Summary of £21,463.39 expenditure from 1st October to 31st October 2021
Noted by Councillors.

b) Select expenditure as the monthly random audit checks (October)
Cllr Potts selected Wilbar Associates - £1,290.31.

- c) Consider the Interim Internal Audit Report 2021/22
Cllr Goodyear thanked the Clerk for the exemplary audit. There were no issues of note.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Goodyear, **SECONDED** by the Chairman and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to accept the Interim Internal Audit report 2021/22

- d) Accept the Notice of Conclusion of Annual Audit 2020/21

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Goodyear, **SECONDED** by Cllr Grossmith and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to accept the Notice of Conclusion of Annual Audit 2020/21.

- e) Preparation of Budgets – 2022/23. Agree an ‘in principle’ increase to the precept of 0-3%
Cllr Goodyear reported that initial work had been undertaken by the Clerk and that the draft budget will be discussed in detail by the committees. The aim is to keep the overall increase in precept to below 3% in light of the cost-of-living increase of 2.7%. The tax base is not expected to be announced until December when we will be able to understand the impact of precept upon individual households.

- f) Receipt of CIL funding of £15,678.48
Cllr Goodyear reported that this funding has now been received and represents a 15% contribution, as the planning applications generating this CIL were granted prior to August 2020 when we had no Neighbourhood Plan. Future contributions will be received at the higher rate of 25%. There is a wide remit on how these funds can be spent and there is a 5-year spending deadline.

Cllr Stevens asked whether there would be any CIL funds available for the school to assist with their aim to build a mobile classroom.

Action Point: The OP to check and advise Cllr Stevens whether any S106 is available.
Action Point: The Clerk to contact HDC to ask whether CIL funds can be used for the school.

(B) Plans Advisory

Cllr Stevens invited questions on recent minutes.

- a) Gatwick Airport consultation

Cllr Perry explained that she had drafted the response based on the Parish Councils current policies which stated a commitment in 2019 to consider carbon footprint in all its decision making and the Councils recently agreed Carbon Reduction Plan. Based on these policies and what we have seen it cannot be shown that the plans will not harm nature recovery, cause air pollution and/or have a detrimental effect on local wildlife.

Cllr Sharp commented that Gatwick expansion may be the least worst option instead of, for example, building a new airport in another location, but Cllr Goodyear explained that following PAC protocols our judgement needs to be based solely on the proposal put before us now. Cllr Kendall suggested the inclusion of the word ‘strongly’ opposed. Cllr Donoghue commented that individuals can also make their own responses.

ALL AGREED to submit Cllr Perry’s drafted response to the Gatwick proposal, subject to the inclusion of the word ‘strongly’.

Action Point: The Clerk to publicise the Gatwick consultation on Facebook and to submit an appropriate response to the Consultation

(C) Recreation & Open Spaces

Cllr Perry reported that it is hoped that progress can now be made on the management plan for the Sandpit Field. The committee are meeting next week.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Perry for leading on the COP26 walks which took place last weekend. They were well attended despite the longer route being quite treacherous due to heavy rain. Cllr Perry thanked all that attended however it was noted that not many younger people engaged with the event. SH2030 are hoping to connect more with younger people in future.

- a) The Three Parishes trail leaflet - Promotion of this walk will be delayed until spring, due to heavy rain affecting the trails and the potential safety of users.

(D) Village Amenities

Cllr Jones reported that a site visit to assess the Coopers Way car park for an electricity supply took place last week and that once the quotation is received an application for grant funding can be made to HDC. The Chairman confirmed that the funding is only available to the end of the year and that having an electricity supply in the car park will be of great benefit, not only to local businesses and the artisan market but potentially for other events.

(E) Museum

Cllr Donoghue reports that she hopes the new book about the history of the High Street will be available to purchase by the next meeting and that funding is now in place for the digitisation project.

(F) Commons

Cllr Sharp reported that the Commons are receiving a lot more interest and officer time from HDC. Discussion is taking place regarding removal of some of the trees in the reed bed which soak up water and HDC is also in favour of introducing cows to the Common if at all possible.

10. REPORTS OF MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON EXTERNAL BODIES

The Chairman reported that there will be a face-to-face meeting of HDC and HALC Members on the 30th November. The themes of the meeting will need to be agreed with HDC but he is proposing biodiversity (Wilder Horsham initiative), climate change and as well as an update on the Local Plan.

11. PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES

PCSO Tracey Bicknell visited the Parish Office last week. She explained that three further PCSO's are being trained for the New Year and she hopes that one of them will be allocated to support her. Henfield issues continue to be minor, particularly in comparison to the anti-social behaviour problems being experienced in other local villages.

12. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

Cllr Potts congratulated Cllr Jones and the Henfield Theatre company on their recent production of the Government Inspector.

13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

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

Meeting closed at 8.04pm.