**HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

**Extraordinary Meeting of Henfield Parish Council held on**

**Tuesday 21st December 2021 at 7:00pm in the Garden Room at The Henfield Hall.**

**Present:** Cllrs M Eastwood (Chairman), E Goodyear, J Jones, M Morgan, D Jemmett,

D Grossmith, A Sharp and G Perry.

**In attendance:** Mr K Wright (Clerk) and Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager).

The Chairman thanked Councillors for attending the Extraordinary Meeting at short notice. He explained that the meeting had been called due to fears that COVID restrictions could prevent the Council from meeting in person in January. Given the Government requires us to make all financial decisions at face-to-face public meetings, he felt it prudent to meet before Christmas to finalise the budgets for 2022/23. The next meeting in January is likely to take place on Zoom unless the Covid situation changes.

**MINUTES**

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

Cllr Morgan declared an ‘other registerable interest’ in items 3, 4 and 5 as he is the treasurer of the Clarkes Mead Trust. As previously discussed with the Clerk, he will stay and vote for items 3 and 4, as there is no new funding proposed in the budget or precept, but will leave the room for item 5.

Cllr Jones also declared an ‘other registerable interest’ in items 3, 4 and 5, as she is a trustee of the Clarkes Mead Trust. For the same reasons given above, she will stay and vote in items 3 and 4 but will leave the room for item 5.

Councillors and the Clerk agreed with these proposed actions.

**2.** **APOLOGIES**

Cllrs Potts, Donoghue, Kendall, Simmonds, Stevens, Farrell and Shaw.

**3.** **MOTION: TO APPROVE COUNCIL EXPENDITURE AND INCOME BUDGETS FOR 2022/23**

A draft budget was circulated prior to the meeting. The budget of £314,405 represents an overall increase of income and expenditure of 5.5%, resulting in a Band D property increase of 3%. The principle previously agreed by Council to keep the Band D increase to 3%, respecting that the coming year is likely to be a tough one for residents and businesses with the impact of inflation and rising energy prices. The approach was to keep the budget and precept level as low as possible but to continue to deliver our projects and improvements by leaning more heavily on the healthy Parish Council reserves in the coming year. Cllr Morgan agreed this was a sensible approach but advised caution so as not to set a precedent for future years as the delivery of services is something that our community has always valued.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Goodyear, **SECONDED** by Cllr Jones and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the Council Expenditure and Income Budgets for 2022/23.

**4. MOTION: TO APPROVE THE PARISH PRECEPT FOR 2022/23 IN THE SUM OF £277,355**

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Goodyear, **SECONDED** by Cllr Sharp and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the Parish Precept for 2022/23 in the sum of £277,355.

**Cllr Morgan and Cllr Jones left the meeting.**

**5. MOTION: TO SET ASIDE £10K - £5K FROM GENERAL RESERVES & £5K FROM COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY FUNDING, FOR THE CLARKES MEAD TRUST IN RESPECT OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW SCOUT/COMMUNITY HALL, SUBJECT TO THE USUAL CRITERIA**

The Chairman explained that the proposed contribution is in addition to the £10,000 set aside in this year’s budget, therefore the total Parish Council contribution will be £20,000. This reflects positively toward the 10% contribution set out in the provision guidance that we set in January 2021 and therefore what the Parish Council would hope to contribute to other Community Organisations for their projects. Cllr Sharp asked how close the Trust are to reaching target, as the previous £10,000 agreed was described as being the last part of the funding needed. The Chairman explained that there has been a significant increase in the cost of materials and that there is a current shortfall of circa £30,000. He also explained that none of the £20,000 would be released until all of the funding is in place, and that the Parish Council can withdraw the offer and change approach if necessary so there is no risk to funds. Cllr Jemmett asked whether all issues had been resolved with regards to the local wildlife. The Chairman explained that mitigation was in place and that plans have now been signed off by Horsham District Council. It is also a condition of planning that the building is for community use and not just for the Scouts. Cllr Grossmith asked for clarity on whether there would be an overall community benefit.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Jemmett, **SECONDED** by Cllr Perry and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to set aside a further £10,000 for the Clarkes Mead Trust in respect of the construction of a new Scout/Community Hall, subject to previously set-out criteria.

**Cllr Morgan and Cllr Jones re-joined the meeting.**

The Chairman asked Cllrs Jones and Morgan to confirm the position regarding current funding. Cllr Jones explained that fundraising is continuing and they are looking to reduce costs where possible. Cllr Morgan explained that there are also promises of work contributions and a fitted kitchen and that he hopes that once demolition starts there may be more donations forthcoming. The Chairman also asked whether there would be a preferential hire rate for Henfield organisations as a particular community benefit. This has not yet been discussed by the Trust but there is already plenty of interest from groups looking to hire the various rooms and the building is likely to make a good income.

**Action Point: The Clerk to transfer £5,000 from General Reserves and £5,000 from CIL to the Community Building Reserves.**

The Clerk drew attention to the collection box for Crisis at Christmas for Councillors to make donations.

**5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 4th January 2022 at 7:00pm, likely to be on Zoom as it is anticipated that no financial decisions will be needed.

**Meeting Closed 7.22pm.**