

## **HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

**Meeting of Henfield Parish Council  
held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022 at 7:00pm in the Henfield Hall.**

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

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

### **MINUTES**

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS 'INTERESTS**

None.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Cllrs A Donoghue and N Stevens.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022**

Approved, signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

a) **Parking in the High Street**

The Chairman spoke to Community Speedwatch who in turn discussed with Sussex Police. A meeting will be held with both shortly to discuss this matter as well as the recent data from the portable speed indicators. Cllr Morgan had also obtained data on the number of tickets issued by Horsham District Council (HDC) over the last three months; this had been circulated to all Councillors. It was noted that the parking enforcement officers are unlikely to be visiting during the peak of the problem, which is early morning and evening.

b) **Carer Support Strategy**

This information was passed to the Medical Centre.

c) **Winter Ready Information.**

This information was circulated via social media.

5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman confirmed that the comparative details of all precepts across the district had been circulated. He commented that, when comparing to other market towns, Henfield's precept sits at around the middle, which looks reasonable.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

**OPEN FORUM**

The Chairman invited the members of the public to speak but they declined.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

6. **PLATINUM JUBILEE EVENTS**

Cllr Goodyear reported that the working group has met several times and a programme of events has been announced on social media as well as details being available on the website. There will be a children's fun activity day on the Kings Field on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June, a retro concert in the Henfield Hall in the evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> June and a big jubilee picnic, fancy dress competition and sports day on the Memorial Field on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June. More details will be announced in coming weeks. The traders' focus is on the Saturday and gaps in the programme have been left so that local street parties can take place.

7. **REWILDING THE HIGH STREET**

Cllr Perry reported that HDC is offering grants and that Henfield Community Partnership has bid for funding with the support of three Parish Councillors and SH2030. The plans include removing some of the cobbles and planting the area in front of SE Tyres with sedum and some tall obelisks for climbers, extensive planting in Bishops Close and Coopers Way, as well as refurbishment of the two benches in these locations. There will be a walk around the village planned with the school to view the new planting as well as some important trees. Cllr Morgan asked that this item is added to the Village Amenities agenda for next week as there will be maintenance issues to discuss.

8. **HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Potts reported that HDC has published the Natural England fact document on water neutrality on their website. This explains the impact on planning policy and applications. There is likely to be a further six months until this issue is resolved. It is unclear what impact this will have on housing numbers. The new levelling up White Paper is due to be announced tomorrow; this may also have implications for housing numbers. There will certainly be more focus on the environment and putting local communities at the heart of this issue. He also reported that HDC has a new CEO, Jane Eaton. She will be taking over in April. He wished her luck and hopes she drives the District forward and is successful in making some difficult decisions, which will need to be resolved.

Cllr Morgan reported that the food waste trial has so far been successful but will be unlikely to roll out for another two to three years, as a new centre to take the waste will need to be built. He also commented that general waste collections may reduce to three weekly when food waste collection is brought in. He mentioned that there are several types of grants still available and that there will be a 2.9% Council Tax increase this year. He also commented that he had received several complaints about a loose and noisy manhole cover in the high street. Southern Water have now fixed it but it took several weeks and a lot of chasing up to achieve this.

Regarding the Local Plan, the Chairman reported that there will be question and answer sessions available on the impact of water neutrality on Neighbourhood Plans. This shouldn't affect Henfield, as our Neighbourhood Plan is already made, however other parishes will face further delays. Calculations on water neutrality have now been finalised and are with Natural England to consider. Once the size of the challenge is understood and agreed, HDC can then work with other agencies including Southern Water on a mitigation strategy.

9. **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Payne commented that the application to reduce the speed limit to 40mph on the A2037 was successful. She will continue to chase for an implementation date. The Chairman congratulated Cllr Payne and the local resident who has led this campaign and added that once signage is in place, Community Speedwatch will likely consider this location as one of their sites. He also highlighted the Safer Internet Day on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February, the annual budget, COVID statistics and the carbon performance initiatives which have reduced WSCC emissions by 18%. Cllr Perry added that she had attended a webinar on Electric Vehicle Charging (EVC) points and asked that the Parish Council circulate the information and promote the scheme to install charging points among community groups and local businesses. It was agreed that Village Amenities Committee will lead on the EVC initiative.

**Action Point: The Operations Manager to include EVC on the agenda for the Village Amenities Committee meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> February.**

**Action Point: The Operations Manager to circulate the information on Safer Internet Day on social media.**

**10. COVID 19 UPDATE**

Cllr Goodyear commented that all decisions must be made in face-to-face meetings and that it is at committees' 'discretion as to whether they are happy to meet in person. She added that Plans Advisory (PAC) would continue to meet on Zoom, as their meetings are advisory only.

The Chairman added that the Medical Centre has now administered over 35,000 vaccinations, a major achievement for village of our size.

**11. HENFIELD'S ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 1<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2022**

**It was agreed by all** that the meeting would take place in person rather than remotely, but that Council will also livestream the speakers only, so as to avoid filming the audience. The Chairman commented that speakers will need to make sure that they repeat any questions that they are asked for the benefit of the virtual audience. Cllr Grossmith added that questions could also be asked via the Zoom chat function. There will be no tea and coffee so as not to encourage excessive mixing afterwards. Following the introduction by the Chairman, there will be three main topics; Biodiversity, Planning Issues and Future Plans for the village. It is hoped that the Museum will put up a display. There will be a meeting in the Parish Office to discuss further detail next Tuesday.

**12. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

a) Summary of £16,497.58 Expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022 was provided. This was noted by Councillors.

b) Selected Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Checks (January 2022)  
Cllr Shaw selected Community Transport Minibus.

Cllr Goodyear added that the Parish Office is having new energy efficient double glazed windows installed on the 11<sup>th</sup> February. This is on the carbon reduction plan. She also reported that there have been seven applications for the position of Works Officer. A meeting will take place to draw up a shortlist tomorrow.

**(B) Plans Advisory**

Cllr Shaw commented that there was nothing of note to report and invited any questions.

**(C) Recreation & Open Spaces**

Cllr Perry reported that there are some issues with the condition of some sports club pitches and the issue of ambulance access to the Rothery Field is ongoing. The Parish Office have successfully made contact with the family who own the bench on the Lydds. This will be repaired by a local craftsman. Works Officers have also repaired another bench on the Lydds that was missing a slat. Cllr Morgan pointed out that the Parish Council are not responsible for the upkeep of donated benches, Cllr Perry acknowledged this and clarified that as these benches were on a trail that the Parish Council were promoting, that they were keen to have those in particular in a good state of repair and that we are simply facilitating their upkeep. The Safe Routes group also continue to make progress.

**(D) Village Amenities**

Cllr Jones reported that there is a meeting next week and invited any questions. Cllr Sharp asked whether there might be any storage space available for Conservation Group in the newly constructed cupboard in the bus shelter. He was advised to speak to the Works Officer.

**(E) Museum**

Cllr Jones reported that she felt that the Friends of Henfield Museum would likely be happy to put up a display for the Annual Parish Meeting. There has been no meeting since November so nothing further to report.

(F) **Commons**

Cllr Sharp reported that plans continue for removal of the willows in the reed bed. This will allow for more diverse water levels and therefore varied habitats for insects. Cllr Simmonds added that some reeds will also need to be removed as they can become matted. This is good practice every few years.

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

Cllr Goodyear reported that she and Cllr Potts attended a webinar on future water plans, hosted by the three main water companies in the region. It was reported that there is likely to be a one billion litre shortfall in water by 2040 if steps are not taken. The three main aims are to educate homeowners on reducing water usage, halving their own leakages by 2050 and reduce extraction by license from rivers. Business use will also be addressed. Planning permission has already been granted for a new reservoir at Havant and there is suggestion of another near Blackstone, although there are very few details on this currently and there is unlikely to be any works until 2035.

Cllr Kendall reported that the Leisure Centre have held their AGM. Eric Holder stood down as Chairman, after many years in the position and is now Secretary. Adrian Hillman is the new Chairman and Simon Vickers the Treasurer. Barry and Shirley Mitchell have also stood down. There is one new trustee and another two to be appointed. Plans and projects are in place to raise more funds.

Cllr Perry reported that SH2030 and the conservation volunteers are hoping to plant more trees in the Sandpit Field on the 20<sup>th</sup> February and will be inviting the donors to attend. This will be weather dependent.

The Chairman reported that he had attended a recent board meeting of the West Sussex Association of Local Councils where the WSCC CEO spoke on their budgets and plans. WSALC is now stable and in a good financial position. The service agreement with Mulberry & Co was also discussed and it was agreed to renew their contract for a further year. They will be holding a Legal and Finance Day in the summer and are currently conducting a Health and Wellbeing survey which the Chairman has already completed on behalf of the Parish Council. There was also discussion on the impact of Rampion 2, particularly on tourism. He also commented that the Horsham Association of Local Councils are seen as being very proactive and having a good working relationship with HDC.

14. **PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES**

The Clerk reported that we have had one visit from a PCSO to the Parish Office. They continue to monitor the bus shelter with limited resources. There was nothing else to report.

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

None.

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

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 at 7:00pm in the Henfield Hall.

**Meeting Closed at 8.06pm.**