

## **HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL - FINANCE RISK & CHANGE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**Meeting of the Finance Risk & Change Governance Committee held on  
Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 7:00pm in the Committee Room, Henfield Hall.**

**Present:** Cllrs E Goodyear (Chairman), M Eastwood, A Donoghue, G Perry, J Jones and R Shaw.

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

### **MINUTES**

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

None.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr N Stevens.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022**

**It was agreed** that the wording for item 7 is changed from 'small tests' to 'appropriate assessments may be needed'. Amended, signed and dated by the Chairman.

**Action Point: The OM to amend on the website.**

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

a) The Future of the Community Bus

A meeting has been arranged to discuss next week.

b) Approve a Retirement Contribution for the Retiring Works Officer

The Clerk took advice from A&B Matters who confirmed that there is no limit to trivial benefit gift cards, subject to it being no more than £50 per employee. Following discussion **it was all agreed** to make an ex gratia payment equivalent to £400 net through payroll.

c) Installation of the New Electricity Outlet in Coopers Way Car Park

The OM has instructed the contractor, it is hoped that the work will be completed by the end of March.

**Action Point: The OM to chase the contractor for a starting date for the works.**

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

### **OPEN FORUM**

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

6. **REVIEW AND RECOMMEND THE PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN TO FULL COUNCIL**

A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman explained that having a business plan was a recommendation by the auditor, although it is not a statutory requirement. She intends to also produce a simplified version that can be included on the website. Cllr Eastwood added that the business plan follows the strategic plan and noted that the wording under item six was changed from 'frail to 'those who need it most'. As this is a change to the strategic plan this alteration will need to be approved by Full Council.

Cllr Donoghue suggested the following amendments to the wording of the Business Plan:

- Under item six, to change the wording to add 'consider' employing a Youth Officer.
- Under item two, to add mention of the Conservation Area and Trees.
- Under Actions, Diversity and Succession, to mention the election next year and note that Councillors are volunteers.
- Under Building Awareness, include the Annual Parish Meeting and Communications Strategy as a fourth bullet point.

Cllr Shaw added that there may be implications for future budgets and committee structure to consider. **It was all agreed** to recommend the Business Plan to Full Council subject to the amendments above.

#### 7. **WORKS OFFICER RECRUITMENT AND PENSION ENTITLEMENT**

The Chairman explained that there had been seven applicants for the position; these were shortlisted to three and one candidate dropped out. The remaining two were interviewed by the Chairman, Cllr Jones and the OM and a candidate selected who has since attended the Parish Office for a discussion with existing Works Officers. It was felt by interviewers that the candidate selected had much more relevant experience having worked in grounds maintenance for both borough and county councils and had all of the relevant skills needed. The Chairman added that the other candidate, although less experienced, was also impressive. She also asked the committee to consider whether to offer the new Works Officer membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Automatic enrolment into another government approved pension would otherwise be the alternative. She recommended offering the LGPS if it was possible so as not to have a two tier pension system within the Parish Council.

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Jones and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to offer the preferred candidate the position of Works Officer and membership of the LGPS if possible, subject to references and a six month probation period.

**Action Point: The Clerk to contact both interviewees, research the LGPS membership position and obtain references as soon as possible.**

#### 8. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE AUDITS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HEALTH & SAFETY REGISTER AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY REGISTER**

The Chairman explained that these were reviewed with the Clerk last week.

On the Business Continuity Register there were only minor changes,

On the Health and Safety Register, the committee noted that there will likely be updates to training certification needed for the new Works Officer. The Chairman also mentioned that the ROSPA report had highlighted works needed to the play tunnel on the Kings Field play area, which is in hand with the works team. She also mentioned that the Henfield Hall now has a new Health and Safety representative and that Parish Office staff and the museum volunteer had taken part in a fire drill on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021. **It was all agreed** to approve the audits of the Parish Council Health and Safety and Business Continuity Registers.

**Action Point: The OM to speak to the works officer regarding re installing the panic button in the Parish Office.**

#### 9. **FINANCE**

a) Confirmation of Reconciliation of Bank Accounts (January)  
Signed and dated by two Councillors.

b) Internal Controls (To Include Audit Check of Expenditure) - Community Transport Sussex Minibus – £1,000.00 (January)  
Signed and dated by two Councillors.

c) To Note the Overspend Against the 'Computer Cost' Budget and Allow the Use of General Reserves.

The Clerk explained that the cost of the Parish Council email addresses from Microsoft is £912 per year. Payments for this have been taken in April 2021 and again as an advance payment in February 2022, therefore both in the same financial year. This will show in the budget as an overspend. This was noted by Councillors.

- d) To consider the use of General Reserves to Fund the Resurfacing of Footpaths in the Cemetery. Cllr Jones explained that she had attended a site meeting with Cllr Morgan and a local contractor who advised on the work needed to repair paths in the cemetery as well as a priority order for various sections, with a view to drawing up a rolling programme. Following discussion it was agreed that these works are needed, particularly due to potential trip hazards, and that the first two urgent sections should be completed this year if possible, with a budget for the rest going forward. The Clerk advised caution not to deplete General Reserves too far this year. **It was agreed** by all to obtain two further quotations for the most urgent two sections.

**Action Point: The OM to obtain two further quotations for the two most urgent sections of cemetery pathway repairs.**

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

Cllr Jones reported that she has received an update on the building works planned to replace the Scout Hut. Demolition is due to start very shortly and it is hoped building work will begin in July. The aim is for the Scouts to be able to move into the new building in March 2023.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** - Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

**Meeting Closed at 8.14pm.**