

## HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

### **Annual General Meeting of Henfield Parish Council held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 at 7.00pm in The Henfield Hall.**

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

**In attendance:** Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager) and Cllr S Payne (West Sussex- WSCC).

### MINUTES

The Clerk welcomed all in attendance and explained that the first item on the agenda is to elect a new Chairman for the forthcoming year. He reminded Councillors that Cllr Eastwood has served five years out of a maximum of six.

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR FORTHCOMING YEAR**  
It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Kendall, **SECONDED** by Cllr Goodyear and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to elect Cllr Eastwood as Chairman for the forthcoming year.
2. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS 'INTERESTS**  
There were none.
3. **APOLOGIES**  
Apologies were received from Cllr Shaw.
4. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR FORTHCOMING YEAR**  
It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Perry, **SECONDED** by Cllr Jones and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to elect Cllr Goodyear as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year.
5. **SUCCESSION PLANNING, KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER & COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**  
A report was circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman highlighted that a new Youth Services Committee is proposed as well as a change of meeting frequency to six-weekly for Finance, Risk and Change (FRC), Village Amenities (VAC) and Recreation and Open Spaces (ROS). This will be reviewed at the end of the year, although can be reviewed sooner if needed. Following discussion at the recent FRC meeting, it was decided that it is appropriate to encourage Councillors to rotate the committees that they serve on every three to six years and the same for committee Chairman. FRC considered this to be healthy and helpful and assists with sharing knowledge as well as the burden of work.  
  
Cllr Morgan suggested that it would be more appropriate for Youth Services to be a sub-committee of FRC, or a working group in order to initially discuss terms of reference as well as establish some proposals. The Chairman explained that a Youth Services Committee was a firm commitment in the recently approved business plan, and that the potential to hire a Youth Services Officer is also included in that business plan. As such the group would require a budget, should be represented on FRC and report to full council. Following discussion, **it was agreed** that the suggested members of the Youth Services Committee should form a working group in order to discuss and draft Terms of Reference and to report back at the next meeting of full council in June.  
  
It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Donoghue and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to accept the succession plan, knowledge transfer and committee structure plan, with the amendment that Youth Services would be a working group at least until Terms of Reference are agreed.
6. **APPOINTMENT TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES**  
A report suggesting membership of committees was circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman explained that there are a few changes and that the intention was to spread membership fairly and evenly, whilst also building individual Councillors knowledge through an element of rotation. The

Clerk has spoken to all Councillors in person so that any issues or questions could be discussed and all were supportive.

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Goodyear and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to accept the recommendations in the appointment to council committees report.

The Clerk pointed out that the Museum & VAC Chairs will not yet have been elected prior to the FRC meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> May. **It was agreed by all** that the current Museum and VAC Chairman will attend the next FRC meeting until such time as Chairman of those committees can be elected.

7. **APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Donoghue asked that all current representatives ensure a handover and introduction to any new representatives. The Clerk to advise by email any changes to the relevant organisations.

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Farrell and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to accept the recommendations in the appointment of representatives to outside bodies report.

8. **APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR**

The Clerk explained that the current auditors are Mulberry & Co. They are extremely experienced and ensure that Henfield Parish Council (HPC) doesn't have any issues with the subsequent external audit. They also offer suggestions for improvements to current processes, such as the implementation of the three-year Business Plan. They also offer advise via phone or email throughout the year.

Cllr Jones asked whether there were any alternatives. The Clerk confirmed that, following an internet search, there did not appear to be any local firms. Cllr Donoghue asked if there were guidelines suggesting that auditors are changed. The Clerk explained that only the external auditor is appointed for us. Cllr Jemmett commented that HPC's systems are robust and that sometimes it is beneficial to have an alternative approach but that he is happy to continue with Mulberry & Co. Cllr Kendall asked if value for money was considered. The Clerk confirmed that Mulberry & Co are significantly cheaper than the usual external auditors fees.

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Jones and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to appoint Mulberry & Co as internal auditor.

9. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2022**

Approved, signed and dated by the Chairman.

10. **MATTERS ARISING**

Cllr Goodyear reminded Councillors about the programme of events to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. There is a Children's Activity Day on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, followed by a Beacon event organised by the BP Guild at 9.45pm. There is a concert on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> of June and a big family picnic with brass band, fancy dress, traditional sports, woodland trail and afternoon teas on Sunday the 5<sup>th</sup> of June on the Memorial Field. She reminded Councillors that help is needed stewarding on the Sunday and that first aiders are also required.

11. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

a) Business Plan – Action Plan

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. Actions have been allocated to each Committee and Chairman are asked to follow these through. There will be a review by Full Council every three months. Cllr Goodyear commented that there is a condensed version on the website for public consumption.

b) Illegal Parking on Zig Zag Lines in the High Street

The Chairman explained that he has now spoken to the police officer responsible for Community Speedwatch who commented that the Open Spaces CCTV act would potentially permit the use of

CCTV at the location, but he is waiting for confirmation and guidance from his Inspector who is new in the job. He suggested that we contact HDC as the enforcing authority to see if they are prepared to use the data and act on it, Cllr Morgan has approached HDC who are willing to discuss further although this would be something new in the District. Other villages rely upon warden schemes for this kind of activity. Their Legal Department are also considering the request and will confirm in the next two to three weeks. A meeting can then be set up to discuss further with the member of the public who proposed the project. There will also shortly be a meeting to discuss and review the data collected from the portable speed indicator devices.

c) **Community Facilities Meeting**

There have been two meetings, focusing on sports clubs and the other community buildings in the village. Most projects have time scales moving back, due to covid and other funding issues. It was noted that there is also less CIL money available due to water neutrality delaying developments. The IDP has been updated and will be brought back to Full Council once it has been discussed at FRC. Consideration will be given to adding new cricket club nets. Cllr Simmonds confirmed that demolition of the Scout Community Building is due to begin, but that final permission is still outstanding from HDC. Cllr Morgan offered to see if he could assist with this as there has already been a significant delay.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

**OPEN FORUM**

There were no members of the public at the meeting.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

12. **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Payne highlighted the following items:

- New website pages detailing Climate Action.
- Details of a phone scam claiming to send the £150 energy grant.
- County Road Safety Review.
- Community Risk Management Plan.
- Children's Services to remain with WSCC.
- Water Neutrality.

**Action Point:** The Operations Manager to share relevant information on social media.

13. **HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

a) Big Conversation Meetings in May – Horsham, Pulborough and Ashington

Tickets are still available for Pulborough on the 17<sup>th</sup> May and Ashington on 19<sup>th</sup> May. The Chairman will be attending the Ashington meeting. HDC officers will be present, including the new CEO and the three acting directors. Cllr Morgan confirmed that he is dealing with the new Bishop Park parking regulations and thanked Cllr Payne for her assistance. Cllr Potts confirmed that the Head of Legal at HDC has taken this up and has asked for copies of correspondence from residents and First Port. It is hoped that there may be some grounds for action to be taken. Cllr Morgan also mentioned that there is an increase in car park charges imminent and that SDNPA have some proposals for the cement works site. Cllr Potts added that three meetings have taken place to discuss water neutrality along with local water companies. HDC's Head of Development and Building Control has now been seconded to DEFRA so it is hoped that HDC will be kept fully informed and that the best decisions will be made for the district. He also mentioned the Volunteer Award Scheme for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and commented that there would be a lot of potential deserving recipients in Henfield.

14. **MOTION: TO APPROVE YEAR-END ACCOUNTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/22**

These were circulated prior to the meeting.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Simmonds, **SECONDED** by Cllr Goodyear and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the Year End Accounts.

15. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2021/22**  
This was circulated prior to the meeting.
- It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Morgan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Potts and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the annual governance statement 2021/22.
16. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS FOR 2021/22**  
This was circulated prior to the meeting.
- It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Jones, **SECONDED** By Cllr Perry and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the accounting statements for 2021/22.
17. **MOTION: TO CONSIDER & APPROVE EXPENDITURE OF £9,408 FROM GENERAL RESERVES FOR REPAIRS TO THE CEMETERY PATHS**  
Cllr Jones explained that, having taken advice and sought quotes from several contractors, the Village Amenities Committee concluded that there is a need to repair two sections of cemetery pathways as they are deteriorating to the point where they may become trip hazards. Details were circulated prior to the meeting. She also commented that going forward a budget will be set aside for other future repairs. Cllr Grossmith recommended obtaining risk assessments for the other areas of pathways that have been considered less urgent for repair.
- It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Jones, **SECONDED** by Cllr Farrell and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve spending of £9,408 of General Reserves on cemetery path repairs.
18. **MOTION: TO CONSIDER & APPROVE LEGAL FEES OF BETWEEN £750 AND £1,000 TOWARDS GAINING A RIGHT OF ACCESS TO THE ROTHERY FIELD**  
The landowner has agreed to permit a right of vehicle access to the Rothery Field providing that HPC pay the legal fees. There is currently a bollard preventing vehicle access and permission needs to be sought each time access is needed, although the land-owner has recently shared the combination to the lock with the Clerk only. Cllr Morgan advised gaining this legal right of access now, while the current owner is amenable, in order to avoid potential problems in future. Cllr Simmonds added that the landowner has been very helpful with regards to the planning for the forthcoming Beacon event due to be held on the Rothery.
- It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Simmonds, **SECONDED** By Cllr Perry and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve legal fees of between £750 and £1,000 towards gaining a right of access to the Rothery Field.
19. **MOTION: TO REVIEW & APPROVE THE CURRENT STANDING ORDERS**  
HPC have been advised by the Internal Auditor to record in the minutes that we have reviewed and approved the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations each year at the AGM. These were circulated prior to the meeting and have not been altered.
- It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Goodyear, **SECONDED** by Cllr Potts and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the current standing orders.
20. **MOTION: TO REVIEW & APPROVE THE CURRENT FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**  
These were circulated prior to the meeting.
- It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Goodyear, **SECONDED** by Cllr Kendall and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the current financial regulations.
21. **TO CONSIDER HOLDING A HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY ANNUALLY ON 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY**  
An email request from a local resident was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Morgan explained that this had been discussed at a recent VAC meeting, but it was felt that it was a decision to be made by Full Council. The Chairman commented that it may be more appropriate for an outside body or group to organise such an event, in a similar manner to the St George's Day celebrations,

but that he felt that HPC could attend and participate if invited. He added that more detail would be needed as well as a risk assessment for the event. Following brief discussion and a show of hands 13 in favour and one against, **it was agreed** to be generally supportive of the suggestion, but to confirm that HPC would not be in a position to organise or fund such an event.

## 22. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### (A) **Finance and General Purposes**

- (a) Summary of £20,073.52 expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022.  
Noted by Council.
- (b) Select expenditure as the monthly random audit check.  
Cllr Sharp selected Body Worn Camera.

### (B) **Plans Advisory**

The Chairman invited questions on the recent minutes. He added that it was very disappointing to see the loss of the Cedar of Lebanon Tree at the Catholic Church and that he felt that the procedure had been poorly managed by HDC Planning as well as the Catholic Church. The tree had a TPO on it and, regardless of whether the tree was dangerous, a report should have been produced and correct procedure followed.

### (C) **Recreation & Open Spaces**

Cllr Perry reported that there has been a recent meeting to discuss works to the Memorial Field as well as a useful meeting of tree wardens. The Chairman thanked her for her work on the Greener High Street project and added that some of the information could be used in a trail layer. Cllr Jones confirmed that future planting and watering will be the responsibility of the VAC committee.

### (D) **Village Amenities**

Cllr Jones reported that most of the current issues have already been discussed at this meeting but added that there is now a deadline for the removal of the tennis club container in the Leisure Centre car park and that there is an alternative plan in place for the space needed by the football club for their upcoming tournament.

### (E) **Museum**

Cllr Donoghue reported that the Friends have recently held their AGM. The Chair and Vice Chair have rotated their positions so their representation on the Museum Committee remains the same.

### (F) **Joint Commons**

Cllr Sharp reported that the recent St George's Day event on the Common was successful and that the Scouts had left the area very tidy. He added that he is hoping for a management plan for Broadmere Common and that actions from this can begin this winter.

## 23. **REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

### a) **Henfield Help for Ukraine**

Cllr Goodyear reported that a new body has been set up led by Rev Paul Doick and involving HPC and Henfield Community Partnership. A new website has been created with lots of useful information and there is a list of volunteers including translators ready to help. Cllr Perry and the Parish Administrator are attending a meeting with HDC tomorrow. Some families have already arrived in the village and there are more to come; it is understood that there are around 30 families already in the district. The Chairman confirmed that WSCC have good systems in place and that our role will mainly be to signpost for information and support. Cllr Simmonds added that the BP Guild are also involved with collecting and delivering donations, Cllr Farrell added that a lot of clothes have been donated locally.

## 24. **PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES**

The Clerk confirmed that there is nothing to report.

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

There were none.

26. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 7.00pm.

**Meeting Closed at 8.32pm.**