

## **HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

**Meeting of Henfield Parish Council  
held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 7.00pm in The Henfield Hall.**

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

**In attendance:** Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager - OM) and six members of the public.

One minutes silence was held in remembrance of former Henfield Parish Councillor Matthew Brookbank, who served on Council from 2002 to 2013.

### **MINUTES**

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**  
Cllr Simmonds declared a personal interest in item 10 as Chairman of the Henfield Club.  
Cllr Morgan declared a personal interest in item 10 as Chairman of the Trustees of Henfield Club.
2. **APOLOGIES**  
Cllrs Eastwood, Stevens and Donoghue. Also Cllr S Payne (West Sussex County Council).
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5<sup>th</sup> JULY 2022**  
Approved, signed and dated by the Chairman.
4. **MATTERS ARISING**
  - a) Crouch Hill Grass Cutting  
This work has now been carried out by West Sussex County Council (WSSCC). The works team are unable to cut verges where the speed limit exceeds 30mph.
  - b) Councillor Insurance Cover When Undertaking Outside Work  
The Chairman confirmed that Councillors and volunteers are insured to carry out work on behalf of Henfield Parish Council.
  - c) Medical Centre Support Update  
Cllr Eastwood has been in communication with the Medical Centre and volunteers have been assisting in the dispensary, carrying out administrative tasks. There is now a new pharmacist and Cllr Eastwood will be in further discussion with her on her return from annual leave. Cllr Kendall added that he felt the Medical Centre were appreciative of the assistance and that the office staff will be making more use of the text service. There is a new appointment system but this has yet to be reviewed.
5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
  - a) Parish Council Response to the Death of a High-Profile Figure  
A guidance document was circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman explained it is useful for all to be aware of the process in case of any Councillor or staff absence.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

### **OPEN FORUM**

A representative from Henfield Club explained that they are very keen to increase community involvement and are working hard to encourage and recruit more members and hold more events. She explained that the upstairs room is still under used but there has been discussion around the potential to use the space for remote working, as a meeting space and for an after-school club for older children.

The Chairman stated that the after-school club will be discussed further by the Children and Young People Committee. Cllr Perry mentioned that there may also be potential to use the club as a warm space, given the current cost of living crisis.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

6. **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

a) WSCC Bus Strategy

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Perry explained that a lot of feedback had been gathered over a long period of time and the key improvements needed are as follows

- Return to a half hourly service
- Sunday service
- Evening service
- Better publicity around services, particularly Compass buses
- New routes to stations and hospitals
- Reduction of ticket prices, particularly for young people.

Cllr Perry added that she hopes that Cllr Sarah Payne will use this report in order to make a case for improvements in Henfield as there is a significant amount of funding available. Cllr Grossmith added that there ought to be a priority order and Cllr Kendall mentioned that a bus service to Hassocks station should be a high priority.

7. **HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Morgan reported that there will be a community drop-in session on 16<sup>th</sup> November for local residents to speak to advisers for support on the cost of living. Otherwise, the usual planning issues continue.

Cllr Potts reported that DEFRA have approved an initial grant of £500,000 in order to make improvements to the River Adur, in particular its resilience to flooding and drought. This is part of the Weald to Wave project. In terms of planning, he added that the Design Lab business now has car sales on their site. This situation will continue to be monitored.

a) Climate Change Workshops

Cllr Perry will attend to represent the Council and the Chairman will attend the ecology workshop.

b) Shared Prosperity Fund Expression of Interest Update

The initial application for improvements to children and young people's services has passed the initial stage. Further detail on the project may need to be provided for the next part of the application process.

8. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE OUTSIDE BODY REPRESENTATIVE GUIDELINES**

A draft of the guidelines was circulated prior to the meeting. It was felt that there is a potential for a conflict of interest if a Councillor becomes a trustee of an organisation in cases where the council has a financial interest or is the landowner. Therefore **it was agreed** that the Chairman would discuss further with the Clerk and Cllr Morgan and appropriate alterations made to the guidelines.

9. **MOTION: TO APPROVE EXCEPTIONAL EXPENDITURE OF £1,500 FROM PARISH COUNCIL RESERVES TOWARDS THE COST OF £7,475 (EX VAT) FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE WILLOWS FROM THE REED BED, THE JOINT COMMONS COMMITTEE HAVING EXHAUSTED ITS BUDGET**

A report and quotation was circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman explained that the Commons are owned by Horsham District Council (HDC) but that they only provide funding for basic maintenance. The Committee have most of the funds available although it will mean there is nothing left in their budget for any other work

that may need doing, such as tree work. However, it was felt that the work to the reed bed is vital and costs will only increase. Cllr Simmonds asked that pressure is put on HDC to increase their budget. Cllr Morgan confirmed that they will continue to do this and that recent new officers at HDC have been more proactive. The Chairman added that the Commons may also benefit from some more HDC Ranger time as well. In addition some further Parish Council funding may need to be set aside in future budget planning.

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Simmonds, **SECONDED** by Cllr Potts and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the exceptional expenditure of £1,500 from Parish Council reserves towards the cost of removal of the willows from the reed bed.

10. **CONSIDER USING THE HENFIELD CLUB FOR SEVERAL OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

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

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. Following on from the discussion in Open Forum, the Chairman explained that the suggestion had been that the Village Amenities, Recreation and Open Spaces and Children and Young People committee meetings are held in the upstairs room at the Henfield Club in order to attempt to support them financially and that the Full Council, Plans Advisory and Finance, Risk and Change Governance Committee should remain in the Henfield Hall, as there are more likely to be members of the public in attendance. Following discussion, it was felt that the financial contribution would be fairly insignificant and it would be inappropriate for the Council to be seen to be playing one venue off against another. There was also a concern in regard to access - a steep flight of stairs, would mean that accessibility for the public would be compromised. **It was all agreed** that the more informal Council working group meetings, that don't require public access, could take place in the Henfield Club on a trial basis but that the Council committee meetings would remain in the Henfield Hall.

**Cllr Morgan and Cllr Simmonds rejoined the meeting.**

11. **CONSIDER HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CHALLENGES**

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman explained that the Rev Paul Doick had been in touch and in collaboration with all three churches, they are starting to make plans for how local residents can be supported. They also have some involvement with the Family Support Work charity. Cllr Perry confirmed that SH2030 would also like to assist and along with the Henfield Community Partnership, may be able to offer advise on lowering energy bills. The Chairman added that it might be appropriate to start contacting local businesses and organisations that may be able to help and that there may be some support that can be offered to the Food Bank as well. She added that she wondered whether a Children's Christmas party might be welcomed and suggested that the issue is discussed further at the next Finance Committee meeting with perhaps some funding set aside. Cllr Jemmett advised that there may be some government support announced in the next few days.

**Action Point:** The Chairman to respond to the Rev Paul Doick and the Clerk to include the item on the next Finance agenda.

12. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

- (a) Summary of £28,821.09 expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> July – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022 and £22,419.28 expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.  
Both noted by Council.

- (b) Select expenditure as the monthly random audit checks – July & August.  
Cllr Simmonds selected Henfield Hall bookings.  
Cllr Morgan selected WC Hire.
- (c) Budgets for 2023/24, bearing in mind the Business Plan goals.  
The Chairman asked that all committees consider their budget requirements for the next financial year, bearing in mind the action points and goals from the Business Plan. This will be for discussion in October meetings.
- (d) Updated report from Cllr Morgan concerning land owned or leased by Henfield Parish Council.  
It was all agreed that this is a very useful report and thanks were extended to Cllr Morgan. The information has been updated on the website.

**(B) Plans Advisory**

Cllr Shaw invited any questions from recent minutes.

- (a) Note the Planning Decision Analysis and Learning Points from the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.  
A report was circulated prior to the meeting detailing how the Parish Council recommendations compared to the decisions made by HDC. Cllr Shaw pointed out that largely the decisions cross over and that the information could lead to a better understanding of the process. He confirmed that the report will be produced every six months. He thanked Cllr Eastwood and the Parish Administrator for their work producing it. Cllr Morgan added that it has been very helpful to have the additional detail and reasoning for the decisions made by the Parish Council.

**(C) Recreation & Open Spaces**

Cllr Perry reported that she is very pleased with the work on the mound and tunnel and that the recent ROSPA report has now been followed up. She is hopeful that the Community Payback team may be able to assist with improvements to the play areas. She added that the need for shade has been added to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and thanked Cllr Simmonds for the new sign he made for the orchard.

**(D) Village Amenities**

Cllr Jones invited questions on the minutes and advised that the committee will be discussing improvements to the village square at the next meeting tomorrow.

**(E) Children & Young People**

The Chairman reported that there has been discussion on after-school provision and the feedback obtained from young people. It was confirmed that 2023 will be the year of young people and several events are also being discussed. As this is a new committee there will need to be a new budget, which will be discussed in further detail at the next meeting.

**(F) Museum**

Cllr Jones invited questions on recent minutes. The Chairman added that the Museum now has much improved Wi-Fi thanks to a general upgrade by the Parish Office and that they should now be able to successfully take card payments.

**(G) Joint Commons**

Cllr Sharp reported there will be a meeting at the end of September and that the conservation volunteers will be beginning work on Broadmere Common on the 18<sup>th</sup> September. He highlighted the difficulty and expense of removing cut material but will be discussing further with a local contractor.

13.

**REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Jones reported that she had attended the Clarkes Mead Trust AGM in August and that the old scout hut has now been demolished. Due to increasing costs of steel, there are plans to purchase this soon to avoid further price rises. Cllr Simmonds added that although there is a funding shortfall, they are confident that the outer building can be constructed and sealed by November. Fund raising continues for the internal work.

Cllr Perry reported that the HDC Cabinet Member for the Environment and Rural affairs will be visiting Henfield on Sunday to see work paid for by the Community Climate Fund. She added that it is the Great Big Green Week at the end of this month and has further information available for those interested.

The Chairman commented that the Henfield Hall solar panels are now installed and since April have seen a 65% reduction in electricity usage. This also benefits the Parish Council as they pay 16% of the costs. Cllr Simmonds added that solar panels are being considered for the new scout building and Cllr Shaw mentioned the solar panel project at the Haven is also progressing.

14.

**PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES**

There was nothing to report.

15.

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

None.

16.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 7.00pm.

**Meeting Closed at 8.14pm.**