

HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL - FINANCE RISK & CHANGE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Meeting of the **Finance Risk & Change Governance Committee** held on **Tuesday 31st January 2023 at 7:00pm** in the Committee Room at The Henfield Hall.

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

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

MINUTES

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None.

2. APOLOGIES

Cllr R Shaw.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20th DECEMBER 2022

An email was received from Cllr Shaw suggesting further clarification on the parameters on reserves. **It was agreed** that this was not necessary for the minutes but would be included in the Financial Regulations. He had also suggested that the comment relating to plot preparation taking place in Parish Council time was removed due to lack of evidence, however **it was all agreed** that the Parish Council are aware that this takes place and that the minutes correctly reflect the situation.

Therefore the minutes were approved, signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

a) Review of Henfield Parish Council's Pension Policy

The policy was reviewed by Cllr Shaw. Currently it states that the LGPS will be offered to office staff but it was agreed that it should be offered to all staff that meet the eligibility criteria.

Action Point: The Clerk to make the above amendment.

b) Add Parameters for Future Reserves to our Financial Regulations.

The parameters have already been agreed. The Clerk has yet to amend the Financial Regulations.

Action Point: The Clerk to amend the Financial Regulations to include the parameters for future reserves.

c) Increase in Our Fidelity Insurance.

The insurance has been amended to increase the fraud and dishonesty cover to £500,000 and include the sit on mower. There was an increase in premium of £165.70, pro rata £128.47 as part way through the year.

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

a) Coronation Family Day

A family fun day is being organised by the Children and Young People Committee on the Rothery Field on Sunday 7th May. There has already been support confirmed by various organisations that assisted with the Jubilee celebrations. Cllr Simmonds is discussing the possibility of the BP Guild providing a BBQ and bar in the evening. The position with lighting the beacon is yet to be confirmed. The Chairman will raise the Volunteering Day (Monday the 8th May) with Henfield Community Partnership (HCP).

b) **Community Fridge.**

The fridge will be arriving this week and will be located in the Leisure Centre. There are eight volunteers signed up and several Henfield food businesses have agreed to donate surplus food regularly. Insurance and a bank account will be needed. The Chairman will discuss this with HCP.

The Chairman also commented that she had attended the NALC Women's Network where NALC were consulting on mandatory training for Councillors. She suggested and **it was all agreed** to keep a schedule of training that Cllrs and staff attend following the May elections. The aim being that at least one member of each HPC committee has attended a training course relevant to that committee's work.

6. **CONSIDER THE IMPACT OF THE CLOSURE OF THE BUDGENS STORE AND THE OPENING OF THE NEW SAINSBURY'S STORE**

It was all agreed that some contact and discussion with Sainsburys would be helpful and it was agreed to invite preferably the new store manager to the Annual Parish Meeting (APM). As there is likely to be a period of eight weeks without a supermarket. Various options were considered including subsidising the Monday bus to Holmbush by reducing the cost from £8 to £4 and providing an additional service using Community Transport to Co-Op in Cowfold. It was also hoped that the smaller high street traders may coordinate efforts to ensure that they have sufficient stock.

Action Point: The Clerk to establish contact with Sainsburys to obtain further information and invite the manager to the APM.

7. **HENFIELD'S ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

It has been confirmed that the Chief Constable Jo Shiner will attend to give a talk on road policing. It was agreed to also invite Community Transport to present on the Electric Car Club. The third item for presentation will be the Year of Young People. There will also be displays from the museum, a stand with the usual annual reports from each committee, information on the community fridge, information on the upcoming elections and hopefully Sainsburys. The Chairman reminded Committee Chairs that their top four headlines for the year are needed.

Action Point: The OM to discuss a survey regarding 20 mph on the high street with Cllr Jones.

Action Point: The OM to investigate a more effective way to live stream the APM.

8. **DISCUSS THE REVIEW OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S BUSINESS PLAN**

A full review will be conducted at the next meeting of this committee. Each committee will be discussing their progress at individual meetings over the next month in order to report back. With regards to this committee, it was concluded that there has been significant progress on Community Buildings and delivery of events. Work on biodiversity is ongoing. A campaign to attract new Cllrs will be delivered in advance of the May elections. It was agreed to participate in a promotional video by WSALC as well as to produce a Parish Council video comprising of short clips filmed in different locations such as the orchard, cemetery, commons and crocus ribbon. Interested parties can be invited to discuss being a Cllr with existing Cllrs rather than holding a general drop-in session at the Henfield Hall.

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) – January.
Signed and dated by two Councillors.

c) Approve Setting up an Ethical Bank Account.

A report with comparison tables was circulated prior to the meeting. The three banks recommended were Unity, Charity Bank and Boom. Following brief discussion, it was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Jones and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to transfer £75,000 from the HSBC Money Manager account to a one year fixed account with Charity Bank with an interest rate of 3.11%. This transfer to take place in February.

- d) Approve the Setting up of a Further Bank Account to Meet the Auditor's Recommendation.
It was recommended by the auditor to set up a further bank account as there is frequently more than the £85,000 protected by the Financial Compensation Scheme in the HSBC account (currently £205,517). In addition to the additional account agreed in the previous item, it was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Eastwood and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to transfer a further £75,000 from the HSBC Money Manager account to an instant access account with Unity Bank paying 1.7% interest in April (once the precept payment has been received). **It was also agreed** to move the total balance in the Natwest account (£75,465) to a 95 day notice account with Natwest as it pays a better rate of interest (3%).

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

Cllr Donoghue raised that Horsham District Council are running trustee workshops in May. She will share the information with the committee in order for Cllrs to circulate as appropriate.

Cllr Eastwood raised that Horsham District Council have recently lost a planning appeal for the building of a further 82 homes in Billingshurst. This was on the basis of a lack of the Local Plan and being unable to demonstrate a five year land supply, as well as mitigation on the water neutrality issue being satisfied by the landowner (a farmer) agreeing to waive his right to water supply from the River Adur by installing rainwater capture.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** – Date of Next Meeting Tuesday 21st March 2023.

Meeting Closed at 8.35pm.