

## HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of **Henfield Parish Council** held on **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023** at **7.00pm** in The Henfield Hall.

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

**In Attendance** : Cllr S Payne (West Sussex County Council – WSCC), Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs B Samrah (Parish Administrator – PA)

### MINUTES

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS 'INTERESTS**

There were none.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Were received from Cllr Stevens.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2023 & THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2023**

These were both approved and signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

a) High Street CCTV at pedestrians crossing next to One Stop & Visit from the Chief Constable – The Chairman said that this would hopefully be arranged within the next two to three months depending upon diary availability. We have shared our email exchanges on the subject with her.

b) Brighton Road – Possible Speedwatch Site – It was confirmed that the Operations Manager (OM) has sent details to Speedwatch Co-Ordinator for additional site consideration.

c) PCSO Information Days - The Clerk confirmed that PCSO has agreed to give as much notice as possible for his next information day.

d) Scout Community Centre Update – The Chairman said that agreement could not be reached between the Scouts and the Sheddars to share some of space in exchange for a financial contribution because the Sheddars needed more space than could be made available to them. Cllr Simmonds confirmed that a donation of £25,000 had been received to assist with the building fund. It was also noted that there had been other smaller donations, a loan offer and one of the contractors had offered free work, although Rampion had now withdrawn their offer of funding but the work on the building is still progressing. Cllr Simmonds said that about 200 children would be joining a new group being set up within the Scouts for 3-5 year olds called Squirrels.

The Chairman said that the Sheddars would like to remain in the village possibly at the Tanyard Barn or other land owned by HDC. He also said that the situation is looking hopeful but that a solution is still some way off.

e) Sainsbury's Store Manager – Potential Meeting – The Clerk said that he was in contact with Sainsbury's but did not know the name of the new Manager, but would encourage him or her to come to a Parish Council Meeting when they have been appointed.

f) Future Timings of Standing Committees – The Chairman said that he felt this should be deferred until after the elections and when any new councillors have joined. It was agreed by all to be deferred until the May 2023 meeting.

5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

a) Tennis Pavilion Open Evening – 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023. This was noted.

b) Congratulations to Community Transport Sussex on its Gatwick Diamond Award – It was agreed by all that a letter of congratulations should be sent from the Parish Council.

**ACTION POINT – The Clerk to prepare a letter to be sent to CT Sussex from the Council.**

The Chairman said that he was aware that a resident had written to the MP about the frequency of power cuts in Henfield. It was agreed to write to UKPN to ask them to explain to residents what work was being carried out and what was causing the number of power cuts.

**ACTION POINT – The Clerk to prepare a letter to be sent to UKPN from the Council.**

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

**OPEN FORUM**

There were no members of the public present.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

6. **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

A report from Cllr Payne had been circulated prior to this meeting. The following Headlines were highlighted and it was agreed to circulate further details on social media.

- Motorcycle awareness week.
- Partial reopening of A29 at Pulborough.
- Report a problem with road or pavement has replaced Love West Sussex.
- Solar together 2023.
- Post-16 Transport policy feedback.

Cllr Payne said she would be happy to talk with Rampion about funding for the Scout Hut Building project if they wished her to.

**ACTION POINT – OM to circulate details on social media.**

7. **HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Morgan said that he had enjoyed time at HDC, particularly in helping with residents' problems although he said he was disappointed that the Local Plan had not been approved. Cllr Potts reminded all that expressions of interest in the UK Rural Prosperity fund were still welcomed. He confirmed that HDC was one of only two districts in the area that have been allocated funding to support new and improved infrastructure; 25% of the funding was for projects in 2023-2024 and 75% of the funding was for 2024-2025. The Chairman said that this fund is what the Sheddars were hoping to use. Cllr Potts said that Cherry Picker training has been operated at Dunkleys which was disappointing and Cllr Morgan said that there had been reports of a cafe there too, neither of which have planning approval. The Chairman said that Henfield Football Club had written to HDC to ask for free parking in the car parks for the weekend of the football tournament (20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023), a request which all Councillors supported.

8. **PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS ON 4<sup>th</sup> MAY 2023**

It was confirmed that there were seven candidates standing in the HDC Election for two vacancies: Fiona Ayres (Labour), Jonathan Dane (Liberal Democrats), Malcolm Eastwood (Independent), Sian Fisher (Green), Robert Mohammed (Liberal Democrats), Gill Perry (Green) and Josh Potts (Conservative).

It was confirmed that four councillors were standing down as Parish Councillors at this election: Cllrs Donoghue, Potts, Sharp and Stevens. The Chairman sent them all best wishes and thanks for their hard work. He confirmed that the remaining Councillors were standing again along with two new candidates Andrea May and Samantha Reynolds meaning there

would be no election as there were only 12 candidates in the Henfield Ward and 1 in Small Dole Ward, leaving one vacant position in each ward. He also confirmed that an additional two Councillors will need to be co-opted.

As this would be the Chairman's last meeting having completed his six years as Chair (apart from the first 5 minutes of the next meeting), he made mention of the achievements of this Parish Council:

- Modernisation of how Parish Council works; improved all of its procedures, preparation of a Business Plan to explain our priorities, better Risk Management and managing of the risks more proactively to get things done.
- Improvement of Memorial Field drainage and playing surface.
- Creation of Link Road and car park at Leisure Centre with additional lighting.
- Improvements to Parsonage Track.
- Installation of flood lights on Kingsfield playing field.
- Installation of lights in the cemetery to create a safe after dark walking route.
- Safer roads thanks to Speedwatch and our SIDs; 40mph speed limit by Henfield Common and shortly also on Barrow Hill
- New road surface in the High Street which has also reduced noise level.
- Rescued and improved Village Square.
- Put climate change action on the agenda, more planting of trees and flowers.
- Made Museum more relevant and visible in community with an increase in visitor numbers.
- New play area on Kings Field and improvements of the other playing fields with help from Community Payback.
- Created an Infrastructure Delivery Plan and forged much closer relationships with outside bodies and sports clubs.
- Assisted with the funding of solar panels to the Henfield Hall Roof and installation of double glazing in the office making us more energy efficient.
- Resurfacing of car park at the Leisure Centre.
- Helped with helpline during the Covid Pandemic (a great example of Henfield community spirit in action).
- Improvements to the ecology on Commons.
- Making of Neighbourhood Plan with special thanks to Ray Osgood and Nigel Stevens for the skill and determination, many thanks go to them both.
- Helped rescue Henfield Haven from closure for a second time.
- Establishment of New Children and Young Peoples Committee,
- Three New Walking trails which have brought more visitors to the village.
- Helped Medical Centre; Covid vaccinations and Pharmacy backlog.
- Extended the cemetery and improved the appearance.
- Six Remembrance Events, two Piazza Italia car festivals, one Music Festival, one Summer Fair, Platinum Jubilee Celebrations and Beacon lighting.
- Worked with Community Partnership on events including Artisan market.
- Improvement of Communications; Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (1,500 followers on Facebook) and a brand-new Parish Council website.
- Finances on sound footing with a forward-looking plan of where money will be spent.
- Mowed grass, flailed, dug, repaired equipment, cleared areas, painted.
- Kept village looking like it's cared for in a neat and tidy way but with a care for the environment.
- Worked with WSCC and HDC to get grants and deliver infrastructure improvements
- Reputation of our Village and the Parish Council is held highly.
- Planning - held true to beliefs of what is and is not appropriate development for a Village and fought off Mayfield and Sandy Lane developments, amongst others.
- Responded positively to financial crisis, Community Fridge and the Food Bank.
- Worked as a team to get things done, County, District, Parish Councillors and Staff Members.

He expressed his thanks to those Councillors who are standing down as well as asking those remaining to reflect on what has been achieved in six years and what a positive difference they have made. Cllr Goodyear thanked the Chairman for his leadership over the last six years.

## 9. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

- (a) Summary of £25,965.99 Expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> March – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. This was noted.
- (b) Select Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Checks – March. Cllr Potts Selected Business stream – Public Conveniences.
- (c) Financial Year End Summary 2022/23.

The Clerk confirmed that £310,115.17 had been spent in the last financial year and income of £338,027.25 had been received. This is a difference of £27,912.08.

He also confirmed that cash assets are now £314,049.85 against £295,399.73 at the end of the 2021/22 financial year. Allocated Reserves now stand at £172,548 against £147,274 last year and General Reserves are now £142,380, against £139,742 last year. He also said that the Provisions in 2023/24 of £29,300 will be funded £4,000 by Precept and £25,300 from General Reserves hence the above figure of £142,380 will immediately drop to £117,080.

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

Cllr Shaw said that there had only been one meeting in March and invited questions on those minutes.

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

Cllr Perry said that she hoped to adopt 'No Mow May' for some of the verges in the Village. She also said that the Milne Bench been replaced on the Lydds and invited questions.

The Chairman gave a brief summary of attempted fly tipping at the Kings Field and asked whether we should request the Leisure Centre lock their entrance gate at night. It was pointed out that when this had been a practice previously it led to a lot of confrontation with members of the public parking there so we would need to give notice if we felt it was appropriate. It was agreed by all that this needed to be monitored over the coming weeks between both ROS and VA Committees and keeping the football club updated. It was agreed that the Clerk would follow up with PCSO when he was next in the Office.

## **ACTION POINT – The Clerk to speak with PCSO about Fly Tipping.**

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

Cllr Jones reported that the Committee was still looking to install a Commemorative bench in the Village Square for the life of Queen Elizabeth II. She also confirmed that the faulty lighting in the cemetery will be replaced free of charge.

### **(E) Children & Young People**

Cllr Farrell reported that the launch of the Hub in the Club on the previous Friday night had had been well received. She also confirmed that a number of young people would be very happy to come along and talk at a Parish Council meeting. She said that she was disappointed to hear that some trolling on social media of specific young people had not been acted on promptly by the moderating bodies as requested. She had received complaints from some young people that the Bus Shelter shutter was sometimes lowered whilst they were still inside. The Clerk advised that the volunteer

who lowered the shutter had experienced some backchat when he had asked them to leave the Bus Shelter.

Cllr Farrell said that the young people felt very pleased that they were being listened to and that the Parish Council was making efforts to accommodate events geared to them including the Fun day on the afternoon of Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May.

**(F) Museum**

Cllr Donoghue stated that she was proud of the newly constructed committee which included those who were passionate and did most of the work around the Museum, as well as the Councillors. She would like to ensure that when the new Councillors are appointed, they keep the non-councillor members of the committee informed.

**(G) Joint Commons**

Cllr Sharp reported that negotiations between HDC and the Commons Committee were ongoing. Cllr Eastwood said that it was hoped that the Committee could be run as a volunteer group as much as possible for a trial of a year. He also confirmed that HDC has offered the time of a ranger to assist. Cllr Eastwood thanked Cllr Sharp for his input on the Commons over the years.

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

a) HALC AGM and Face to Face meeting at Horsham District Council on 26th July 2023 – The Chairman confirmed that this meeting previously held in November would be moved to the Summer and was an opportunity for Parish Councillors and District Councillors to meet face to face.

Cllr Goodyear said that at a recent workshop for Weald to Wave which looked at the ecology surrounding the County's rivers running down to the sea she had spent the day mapping our ecology and had received very positive feedback about Henfield's input on ecological matters.

11. **PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES**

Cllr Perry said that she was aware of a number of robberies of garden statues on the Common as well as in the Village which was very disappointing and hoped the Police would take this matter seriously since it seems to be an ongoing problem.

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

There were none.

13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was hoped that the next Parish Council Meeting would be held on 9<sup>th</sup> May and that the FRC Meeting would be moved to 2<sup>nd</sup> May (rooms permitting) and that details would be circulated as soon as room availability could be confirmed.

The Meeting Closed at 8.32pm.