

HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Annual General Meeting of Henfield Parish Council
held on Tuesday 9th May 2023 at 7.00pm in The Henfield Hall.

Present: Cllrs E Goodyear, M Eastwood, J Jones, G Perry, R Kendall, M Morgan, D Jemmett, D Grossmith, S Leader, C Simmonds, N Farrell and A May.

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager), Cllr S Payne – West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) and two members of the public.

MINUTES

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR FORTHCOMING YEAR**
It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Jones, **SECONDED** by Cllr Perry and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to elect Cllr Goodyear as Chairman for the forthcoming year.
2. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**
None.
3. **APOLOGIES**
Cllr Shaw.
4. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR FORTHCOMING YEAR**
It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Grossmith and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to elect Cllr Jones as Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year.
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4th APRIL 2023**
Approved, signed and dated by the Chairman.
6. **APPOINTMENT TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES & TIMINGS OF MEETINGS**
A proposal was circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman explained this may need to be adjusted following advice from Horsham District Council (HDC) monitoring officer regarding Cllr Eastwood's election to District Council. Changes can also be made next year if needed. Each committee to discuss timings at their first meeting bearing in mind the need to be flexible. It was all agreed by show of hands to go ahead with the committee structure as proposed.
7. **APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**
a) Consider a New Outside Body Representative for the Electric Vehicle Car Club.
It was agreed that the Village Amenities committee would nominate a suitable committee member to attend any meetings.
With regards to other outside bodies, the circulated proposal was agreed by show of hands. Cllr Eastwood advised that the HALC representative should be the Chairman of Council and a representative from the Plans Advisory Committee.
8. **APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR**
The Chairman recommended the appointment of Mulberry & Co as per previous years. They offer specialist advice and are very supportive. The Clerk agreed, stating they offer very useful suggestions such as increasing the Fidelity Insurance, spreading risk by opening further bank accounts and recommending parameters for reserves. It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Eastwood and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to appoint Mulberry & Co as internal auditor.

Cllr A May joined the meeting at 7.15pm.

9. **MATTERS ARISING**

a) Sainsbury's Update.

A meeting is planned with the store manager on the 16th May. The Clerk is preparing an agenda.

b) Letter to Community Transport Sussex.

A letter has been sent congratulating Community Transport Sussex on their business award.

c) Response from UK Power Networks.

A comprehensive response was received explaining the reason for the frequent power cuts in the village. This has been shared on social media. Cllr Kendall mentioned that prior warning of cuts would be helpful.

10. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman expressed her thanks to Cllr Morgan as a retiring Horsham District Councillor and congratulated Cllrs Eastwood and Potts on their election to Horsham District Council. She also thanked Cllr Eastwood for his six years' service to the Parish Council as Chairman.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

A member of the public congratulated the Chairman on her election.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

11. **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Payne apologised for not submitting a written report. She commented that WSCC had been very focused on the election period so had little to report, however she did mention that she is following up Cllr Shaw's concerns on the Wheatsheaf Road, has communicated with Cllr Farrell regarding the careers fair and is discussing the state of pavements with WSCC Highways. There is no further news on the implementation of the 40mph limit on Barrow Hill.

12. **HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Eastwood confirmed that HDC is now under Liberal Democrat control. His training as new District Councillor begins tomorrow, it was noted he is the only independent councillor in the district. Otherwise there has been a lot of activity and discussion around grant funding, in particular the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which the Children and Young People Committee, Henfield Sheddars and Padel tennis projects are all hoping to benefit from. He confirmed that there is no limit for buildings or a particular location as all applications are judged on merit.

13. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE FINAL AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR 2022/23**

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Grossmith and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the final Auditor's report for 2022/23. Signed by the Chairman.

14. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE YEAR-END ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/23**

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Kendall and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the Year End Accounts for the financial year 2022/23. Signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

15. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR 2022/23**

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Simmonds and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23. Signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

16. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS FOR 2022/23**

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Jones and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the Accounting Statements for 2022/23. Signed by the Chairman.

17. **MOTION: APPROVE THE CURRENT STANDING ORDERS (REVIEW Q3 2023)**
It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Grossmith and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the current Standing Orders.
18. **MOTION: APPROVE THE CURRENT FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (REVIEW Q1 2024)**
It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Eastwood and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the current Financial Regulations.
19. **TO CONSIDER THE APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL VACANCIES**
The Chairman explained that there are two vacancies and three applications have been received which were circulated prior to the meeting. She asked Council to consider whether to vote now or to advertise the vacancies more widely. To date there has only been one social media post, a mention on the website and small notices put in two noticeboards. The Clerk commented that he has reserved space in the BN5 magazine and the Parish Magazine for publication in their June editions, a vote could then take place in the July meeting of Full Council. He also explained that the co-option process does not specify time scale but that the process needs to be fair and consistent. He will need to be able to justify the decision taken to the Internal Auditor, so he recommended that the vote is delayed, as publicising in the two magazines mentioned should reach every household in the village. Cllr Eastwood asked that the vote went ahead at this meeting as it would reflect the timescale from 2019. He added that the Standing Orders state that the vacancies are filled as soon as practicable and that any interested parties could have stood for election if they were keen. His proposal received supportive comments from both Cllrs Jemmett and Perry. Cllrs Kendall, Morgan and Grossmith all agreed that the vacancies have not been advertised widely enough. Cllr May added it would feel more democratic to advertise in BN5 magazine. Cllr Eastwood warned that current applicants could withdraw their application if the vote does not go ahead. Cllr Kendall stressed that any decision to advertise more widely should not be interpreted as a reflection of the quality of the three applications already received. It was **VOTED SEVEN IN FAVOUR AND THREE AGAINST AND TWO ABSENTIONS** to advertise the vacancies in BN5 magazine and the Parish Magazine and for a vote to take place at the July meeting of Full Council.
- Action Point: The Clerk to contact the publishers of the magazines mentioned to advertise the vacancies.**
Action Point: The Clerk to write to the current applicants to explain the extended deadline.
20. **REVIEW OF CORONATION EVENTS**
Cllr Farrell reported that the event run with the BP Guild went very well, lots of people attended and good feedback was received. Cllr Simmonds added that lots of parents joined in the activities and that the BP Guild will be making a donation from the profits to the Children and Young People Committee. Thanks were also extended to Matt Chard and Henfield Youth Club.
21. **CONSIDER INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING DOCUMENT**
A document was circulated prior to the meeting. It was prepared by Cllr Eastwood with the intention that committee Chairs use it to keep track of the progress of the projects included on the IDP. It was agreed that it is a useful document.
22. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**
- (A) Finance, Risk & Change Governance**
- (a) Summary of £21,078.46 Expenditure from 1st April – 30th April 2023.
Noted by Council.
- (b) Select Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Checks – April.
Cllr Morgan selected Hamfelds.

(B) Plans Advisory

Cllr Grossmith reported that 29 members of the public attended a recent meeting to object to a planning application to build a modern property on land south of Southview Terrace. The committee had agreed the application was not sympathetic to the surroundings.

(C) Recreation & Open Spaces

Cllr Perry reported that there has been a lot of discussion on trees, verges and wildflowers and that there had been an opening ceremony for the new bench purchased by the Milne family and located on the Lydds. She thanked the family for paying for the replacement. There has also been some discussion with the football club who have been invited to the next meeting for a discussion on how they operate.

(D) Village Amenities

Cllr Jones reported that the matter raised at the Annual Parish Meeting, the mirror for the traffic mirror for the Lych Gate, will be discussed at an upcoming meeting with WSCC highways.

(E) Children & Young People

Cllr Farrell explained that the committee had been focused on the Coronation event. Cllr Simmonds added that welcoming young people to the Henfield Club was going very well on Friday and Saturdays. They are mixing with the current members downstairs as well as using the upstairs room and they have expressed their gratitude and appreciation that they have been considered and are being listened to.

(F) Museum

Cllr Jones reported that there will be a meeting on the 31st May and that the Friends had their AGM in April. Rob Gordon is the new Chairman and Leo Jago is the Vice Chairman, they will both also continue on the Museum Committee.

(G) Joint Commons

Cllr Eastwood reported that a budget of £19,780 has been confirmed for the Joint Commons Committee by HDC and new governance proposals have been submitted for HDC's consideration. HDC have also agreed to allocate some warden time to the Henfield Commons and a meeting with the Works Officer and tree warden will take place with the warden soon. Shaylers fun fair will attend from the 15th May to the 20th May and it is hoped the grass can be cut before then. The fair has also been asked to attend again later in the year on the request of the Children and Young People Committee. Cllr Simmonds requested that the height barriers are painted. This will be raised at the next Recreation and Open Spaces meeting.

23. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Perry reported from SH2030 that Henfield Scouts had volunteered at the Community Orchard as part of the Big Help Out for the Coronation; she thanked and congratulated them for their hard work. SH2030 has a public meeting tomorrow with guest speaker Clare Blencoe from Sussex Wildlife Trust and a meeting on the Weald to Waves projects on the 12th July.

Cllr Eastwood reported that the West Sussex Association of Local Councils (WSALC) has met and along with the National Association are lobbying government to be able to hold remote council meetings. They are also looking to regularise members' allowances and introduce sanctions for Councillors who break the Code of Conduct. He also reported that 160,000 trees have been planted in West Sussex as part of the Queen's Green Canopy. He commented that training for new councillors is available and encouraged Cllrs May and Leader to attend if they are able to.

24. PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES

It was noted that there was nothing to report. The Clerk mentioned that he had checked with the PCSO and found that the Police do not get involved in fly tipping as the power of

enforcement is with HDC, although he will also endeavour to check with the Rural Crime Team.

25. **ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**
None.

26. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
Tuesday 6th June 2023.

Meeting Closed at 7.58pm.