

## **HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL - FINANCE RISK & CHANGE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**Meeting of the Finance Risk & Change Governance Committee held on  
Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 at 10:30am in the Committee Room at The Henfield Hall.**

**Present:** Cllrs J Jones (Chairman), E Goodyear, G Perry, S Leader, R Shaw and M Morgan.

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

### **MINUTES**

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

None.

2. **APOLOGIES**

None.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2024**

Approved by all, signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

a) Committee Terms of Reference

The Verges Working Group are due to meet shortly to finalise the terms of reference for the Village Amenities (VAC) and Recreations and Open Spaces (ROS) Committees.

b) Cemetery Lighting

The lighting supplier has yet to respond on whether they will pay for the installation of the new drivers or for replacement bollards if further units fail. It was noted that the supplier no longer uses the drivers concerned, which seems to be an admission that the units are not fit for purpose. It was agreed that the Parish Council needs to take a firm stance and to consider making a claim to the Small Claims Court.

c) Henfield's "Big Thank You"

It was agreed that the original May date is unlikely to be achievable. The Working Group will consider a date in September.

**Action Point: The OM to arrange a meeting of the Working Group.**

d) Infrastructure Delivery Plan

A new draft template was circulated prior to the meeting. This was drawn up following guidance received from Horsham District Council (HDC) Strategic Planning Department and mirrors the headings on HDC's own document. It was all agreed that this is a more suitable format. It was suggested that the guidance for applications is also reviewed. In terms of importance, it was noted that there are priority guidelines in place, but that whether or not a project is achievable ought to also be considered.

**Action Point: The OM to transfer all the current projects onto the new format and to review the projects with the groups and organisations concerned in April.**

e) Skills Matrix

A new version of the skills matrix was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Goodyear explained that the Core Skills are those which are necessary to keep the Council running and that the Committee Skills reflect the most specialist knowledge and experience needed. It was agreed that this is a useful tool for Councillors to understand each other's strengths and may be helpful when considering future co-options and formation of committees. It was noted that the Clerk is ultimately responsible for financial decisions and that the National Association of Local Councils are also available for guidance and advice. The OM added that she keeps a record of training attended by Councillors. It was agreed that this document will be reviewed annually at the AGM.

**Action Point: The Clerk and Cllr Goodyear to review the document and then circulate to all Councillors, asking them to tick whether they felt they had sufficient expertise either to answer questions or to signpost an enquiry on the aspects listed.**

*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**

None.

### **6. UPDATE ON THE TANYARD BARN DEVELOPMENT**

Cllr Morgan reported that the Shedders have drawn up new plans to significantly reduce the size of the Barn development but these have not yet been submitted to HDC. It was noted that the size of the storage being suggested for the Works Team is significantly smaller than expected and that this will need to be increased if possible. It was suggested that there may not be a need for such a large office space, particularly as they are not having a phone line or broadband installed. It was noted that there may be a possibility of moving internal walls, and it was agreed that the Parish Council would not wish to hold up the planning process. Therefore it was agreed that, if planning permission is granted, a working group could be formed with the users, including Works Officers and the Conservation Group, to discuss how the space could be best used. Cllr Morgan will feed this back to the Shedders in the meantime.

### **7. CONSIDER THE USAGE OF THE COMMUNITY TRANSPORT MINIBUS**

The previous process for approving use of the minibus was to seek agreement from three Councillors, one of whom was the late Cllr Eastwood. It was agreed that as long as the request is from a Henfield Community Group, approval could be granted by the Parish Council, provided that there were sufficient funds available from the grant. It was also agreed that a quarterly usage report from Community Transport would be useful. It was noted that there is £1,800 remaining for use by the end of March.

**Action Point: The OM and Youth Coordinator to further promote the use of the Community Bus for community groups.**

### **8. B P GUILD SUMMER EVENT & 80<sup>TH</sup> D-DAY ANNIVERSARY**

A meeting with the BP Guild to discuss both events would be taking place on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Due to the scale of the plans and potential number of attendees at the summer event, there are concerns regarding capacity, access and emergency evacuation. Therefore it was all agreed to recommend that the summer event on the 15<sup>th</sup> June takes place on the Kings Field. It was also agreed that the beacon should not be lit for the summer event and that this should be reserved for important national events, such as the D-Day anniversary on 6<sup>th</sup> June. The BP Guild have confirmed verbally that they are willing to light the beacon at 9.15pm on 6<sup>th</sup> June as per the request from the Pageant Master's Office. VAC and the Henfield Club have also expressed support for a potential additional event to take place at the War Memorial, which may require a contribution of around £150 from the Parish Council. This could either take place prior to the beacon lighting in the evening or earlier in the day at 11am. The Free Church may also be invited to attend and assist. Plans for both events will be discussed further at the meeting tomorrow.

### **9. FINANCE**

a) Confirmation of Reconciliation of Bank Accounts (January).  
Each signed and dated by two Councillors.

b) Internal Controls (To Include Audit Check of Expenditure) – January.  
Each signed and dated by two Councillors.

c) Bank Mandates

The updated mandates for Natwest have now been completed but are outstanding for Barclays and HSBC.

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

Cllr Leader asked whether a response should be sent to Andrew Griffith MP regarding his offer to attend the Annual Parish Meeting (APM). It was agreed that the APM should not be political and it would be inappropriate for him to be invited in what might be an election year. A response to the letter is not needed as it is effectively a circular to all Parish Councils.

Cllr Shaw reported that he now has a final draft of a response to the Local Plan which was circulated to this committee prior to the meeting. It was all agreed to circulate by email to all Councillors to ask whether they agree with the response in principle, would like anything added and are happy to delegate responsibility for submitting the response to Cllr Shaw, provided the intent in the final draft does not change. The deadline for Councillor responses will be the end of Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February; Cllr Shaw will make any amendments over the weekend and the response will be submitted to HDC on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February.

Cllr Goodyear reported that, following a cyber security review and various other issues that have come to light, the Parish Council will be needing a new website. She suggested that this is discussed at the next meeting with the view to allocating some reserves for this. The cost of the current website was £9,000.

The Chairman asked whether all was in hand for the Annual Parish Meeting. Speakers have all confirmed with the exception of one for the Year of Biodiversity item. Cllr Goodyear will look at potential options and will present this herself if necessary. It was also agreed not to provide tea and coffee as in some previous years, as this was not felt to have made any difference to the numbers in attendance, but had resulted in extra work for Councillors and office staff.

The Clerk reported that there have been no applicants for the remaining Councillor vacancy; the deadline for applications is 15<sup>th</sup> March.

#### 11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

20<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

**Meeting Closed at 12.08pm**