



## **HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

**Meeting of Henfield Parish Council held on  
Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 at 7.00pm in The Henfield Hall.**

**Present:** Cllrs E Goodyear (Chairman), J Jones, G Perry, R Kendall, A May, M Morgan, C Simmonds, R Shaw, D Grossmith, S Leader, A Willard, F Ayres and J Potts.

**In attendance:** Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager) and Cllr S Payne-West Sussex County Council (WSCC).

### **MINUTES**

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

None.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr D Jemmett.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2<sup>nd</sup> JULY 2024**

Approved. Signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

a) Review of the Briefing & Awareness Session Run by Trevor Leggo on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> August. It was agreed that this training had been useful, positive feedback was received. Thanks have been conveyed to the Mr Leggo. It was suggested that more is done to improve civic engagement and promote the work of the Parish Council, particularly in light of the general nationwide difficulty in recruiting Parish Councillors.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

**OPEN FORUM**

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

6. **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

The improved bus service in Henfield is now operational, offering half hourly and Sunday services. Some cuts have been made to the service from Partridge Green. Their Parish Council has organised a petition and there are discussions taking place with alternative providers such as the medical centres and Sussex Community Transport. The £2.00 bus fare scheme has been extended to December 2024. Cllr Morgan added that the Village Amenities Committee (VAC) would be discussing this and the newly installed electric vehicle charging (EVC) points in Fabians Way at their next meeting.

7. **HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Perry reported that Horsham District Council (HDC) is moving premises and that there are several significant planning applications relating to Henfield due to be discussed at the Planning South Committee. Cllr Potts reported that the Local Plan has now been submitted to the inspector. The findings are expected in spring next year and it is hoped to receive the final report in the summer of 2025, with a view to adoption in the autumn. HDC continues to work with existing housing targets in light of the recent change of government. Issues surrounding water neutrality are now being resolved. LEAP grants are now open to applications as well as visitor experience grants. The mezzanine project

at the Leisure Centre is moving forward, however the padel courts project is suffering disappointing delays. With regards to the previous Birchfield nursery site, Cllr Potts feels that courts may need to be involved as boundary disputes continue. There are still outstanding enforcement notices relating to the café and hardstanding.

8. **COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION**

No applications were received for the vacancy. It was acknowledged that many other Parish Councils are having the same difficulties. It was suggested that individual Councillors approach any members of the public they feel might be interested and more emphasis could be put on the role of the Council in order to trigger some interest. The Chairman would welcome any ideas and suggestions.

9. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF ANNUAL AUDIT 2023/24**

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Jones, SECONDED by Cllr Grossmith and VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR to approve the Notice of Conclusion of Annual Audit 2023/23.

10. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR REPORT & CERTIFICATE 2023/24**

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Simmonds, SECONDED by Cllr Potts and VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR to approve the External Auditor Report and Certificate 2023/24.

11. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE EMPLOYER LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME DISCRETIONS POLICY**

Cllr Shaw explained that under the scheme, employers have the option to use various discretions at their own cost. He has reviewed the policy and made only minor changes, being cautious not to expose the Council to potential large additional expense in future, while allowing certain discretions under exceptional circumstances if agreed by Full Council. Council thanked Cllr Shaw.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Goodyear, SECONDED by Cllr Perry and VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR to approve the Employer Local Government Pension Scheme Discretions Policy.

12. **MOTION: TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE LEASE BETWEEN HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL AND WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF THE WANTLEY FIELD**

The Council has had several of these leases in the past. This is a similar updated version. The only new requirement is to display some notices at the location. There is a right to terminate for either party with three months' notice. It was noted that the field cannot be promoted as a playing field and that having the lease will not protect the site from future development.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Goodyear, SECONDED by Cllr Ayres and VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR to sign the lease between Henfield Parish Council and WSCC in respect of the Wantley Field.

13. **MOTION: TO CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FOR £10K FROM THE COMMUNITY BUILDINGS INFRASTRUCTURE RESERVE TOWARDS THE COMPLETION OF THE MEZZANINE FLOOR IN HENFIELD LEISURE CENTRE**

Application details were circulated prior to the meeting including a summary of the funding and costs. It was confirmed that the project is included on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan for Henfield. It was further clarified that payments would be made on production of invoices for the works and that £10K was the maximum grant permitted from the IDP reserve.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Potts, SECONDED by Cllr Ayres and VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR to approve the payment of £10,000 towards the completion of the mezzanine floor in Henfield Leisure Centre.

14. **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE**

Henfield's Neighbourhood Plan (NP) runs until 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2031 but starts to lose influence after 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2026. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) would drop from 25% to 15% when the NP ceases. A further meeting is planned with the NP officer at HDC in order to establish what the review process would be and how much assistance would be provided by HDC. There may be further changes due to the new government and the HDC Local Plan will also be an important factor. It was also noted that the Parish Design Statement may also need to be updated and that consultants may need to be instructed due to the volume of work needed. Next steps will be discussed following the meeting with HDC.

## 15. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

Cllr Jones reported that at the most recent meeting there was further discussion on the proposed Summer Fair; advice was given and an assurance that the Council would further consider making a refundable contribution to costs if various conditions are met. The committee also discuss the Communications Strategy and Freedom of Information policy.

(a) Summary of £26,972.70 Expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> July – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024 and Summary of £31,915.67 Expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

Noted by Council.

(b) Select Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Check – July & August.

Cllr Simmonds selected Sainsbury various - £19.40 for July 2024 and Sainsbury various- £18.40 for August 2024.

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

Cllr Shaw reported that the committee had met with Elivia homes to discuss the proposed development of 29 homes in Backsettown, a site on the NP. Several local residents also attended the meeting. There will shortly be a public consultation both online and via a letter drop to residents which will run for two weeks. A planning application will then be submitted to HDC. Some concerns were raised regarding access through Furners Lane and heavy goods traffic, which the developers assured they would do their best to mitigate. It was also noted that Croudace have applied to HDC to bypass the environmental impact assessment for a further 200 homes behind their current development in Henfield.

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

Cllr Perry thanked those who attended and assisted with the Walk for Malcolm which raised over £2,000. Discussions on verge management continues.

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

Cllr Morgan confirmed that the new bench with plaque has been installed on the Village Square and that the new infant memorial is in position in the cemetery.

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

Cllr Leader reported that there will shortly be a working group meeting to discuss skate park improvements.

### **(F) Museum**

The Chairman confirmed that the Museum is keen to carry out a visitor survey. It had 75 visitors on election day and there continues to be good engagement online and with the roving display case.

### **(G) Joint Commons**

Cllr Perry reported that discussions continue with HDC taking on more management of the Commons. Hedges and access to the Tanyard have been discussed and there is now more clarity on who does what and how much the Parish Council can contribute. The committee is short of one Councillor. Cllr Perry asked anyone interested to get in touch.

## 16. **REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Shaw reported that for the ten-year anniversary of the Haven, a ten-month fundraising challenge will begin in January 2025. Representatives from the Haven will attend the next meeting to explain further. Cllr Leader reported that the AGM for the Community Partnership will take place on the 12<sup>th</sup> September. Two directors are standing down. She thanked them for their hard work. Cllr Ayres reported that the late-night shopping event will be on the 6<sup>th</sup> December and that she hopes to have the road closed, the Chairman offered to advise on this. Cllr Grossmith thanked Cllr Potts for his assistance with the Leisure Centre projects. Cllr Perry reported that SH2030 will be celebrating its five-year anniversary next year and have some events planned to thank volunteers.

17. **PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES**

All Councillors had been made aware of the fire started in the brand-new litter bin at the skate park. This was attended by Henfield Fire Brigade and has been reported to the Police, although no further action will be taken at this stage due to lack of CCTV coverage. There is currently an ongoing knife amnesty and several large knives have been handed in to the Parish Office. These were promptly collected by the PCSO.

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

None.

19. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024.

**Meeting Closed at 8.40pm.**