



HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of the Village Amenities Committee held on Wednesday 11th September 2024 at 10.30am at the Henfield Hall

Present: Cllrs Morgan (Chairman), R Kendall, J Jones, S Leader and A Willard.

In Attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager – OM) and Mrs B Samrah (Parish Administrator – PA).

MINUTES

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS**

There were none.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Were received from Cllrs D Jemmett and R Shaw.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING 12th JUNE 2024**

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

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

1. Community Transport Sussex – Trustee from Henfield – There was nothing to report and it was agreed to remove this item from the agenda.
2. Cemetery Lights – The Clerk confirmed that the new drivers will be installed on the lighting bollards on 24th September.
3. Flower beds in Bishops Close and Coopers Way – The Chairman said that there were likely to be delays on the completion of the new development until the new year but that the owners have agreed to regrass the area when work is complete. He also said that Stonepit Nurseries would plant up the beds afterwards. It was agreed that the maintenance would remain with them until at least the new year.
4. Memorial Bench – The Chairman confirmed that the plaque had been added to the Memorial Bench and that the bench was being well used.

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**

The Chairman said that residents had asked about the tarmac between Cagefoot Lane and High Street and had concerns that it might be lost they have asked for assistance with ensuring it remains accessible. They said that a previous owner had roped it off on Christmas Day only to preserve their rights to the path. He said that he had been following this up with the Clerk and Cllr Perry.

The Chairman said that another resident had enquired about getting a season ticket for the car park, he asked that this matter be raised again at the next meeting. As background he explained that up to 31 seasons tickets were granted by HDC and that 21 had been taken by businesses only.

6. **CONSIDER REDUCING PRICE PER KWH AT LEISURE CENTRE ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGER**

The OM said that Pod Point were the company who looked after the charger behind the Leisure Centre and they charge 24p per unit, car users are charged 50p per unit. She said that costs incurred included the administration and the cost of the warranty of the charger. She said that the chargers recently installed by HDC in the car parks were charging 54p per unit. The Clerk confirmed that the cost of 24p was fixed for three years from June 2024. It

was confirmed that there does not appear to be any uniformity in charging between towns, villages or other organisations.

It was agreed to leave the cost at 50p per unit and look again in six months time.

ACTION POINT: OM agreed to put on the agenda for March 2025.

7. **VILLAGE ENTRANCE SIGNS**

1. To consider the quotations received – The Chairman said that all three posts and the signs needed replacing and confirmed that the signs would be the same but without the year 2000 being included. The OM confirmed that the Works Officer had recommended galvanised steel.

Cllr Willard said that the signs in Steyning were more prominent and also had a large collection of flowers included.

The Clerk confirmed that there was no budget for these signs but that CIL funding could be used if agreed by FRC Committee.

It was agreed that the OM would ask Works Officer if the flower baskets could be reused and if not to get a quote for their replacement.

The Chairman said that the signs being discussed at the Signage Working Group were for playing fields, play areas etc.

It was PROPOSED BY the Chairman and SECONDED BY Cllr Kendall and AGREED BY ALL for the quote for Galvanised Posts and signs at £2675.00 plus VAT. It was agreed to take this to the FRC Committee at the next meeting.

8. **JUMBLE SALE TRAIL REQUEST**

The OM said that Youth Club had asked to use Village Square to display their goods for the trail. It was agreed by all.

ACTION POINT: OM to inform the Youth Club of this decision.

9. **VERGE WORKING GROUP UPDATE**

1. Wantley planting – The Chairman said that this working group had reached some conclusions about what it wanted on the verges and green spaces around the village and that for the verge at the north of the village leading along to Wantley Hill the working group wanted some input from this committee as the Working Group wanted it to be allowed to grow freely and possibly with some additional hedgerow.

The Chairman said that the Working Group had anticipated only one more meeting before reaching a consensus and being able to bring their findings to Full Council.

The Chairman explained that at the last Working Group Meeting two members of Grasstex had come along and explained the WSCC mowing schedule which had been very helpful.

The Chairman also said that there was agreement at the Working Group that the following verges would be left or developed as wild flower areas: -

- Wantley Hill verge from the North of the Village as far as the entrance to Wantley Hill
- Verge opposite Fabians Way. (Community Road Verge - CRV) This will need some further development and possibly some seeds.
- Small Triangular verge in Broomfield Road at junction of Broomfield Gardens except around the seat
- Borrer Bank (CRV)
- Swales near Leisure Centre
- Cemetery Extension
- Roadside Bank on the outside of the Rothery Field
- Manor Way CRV

This would mean that the entrance to the North of the Village would be kept cut and the entrance to the village along the Common would be cut for safety only along the edge of the road but the rest left.

The Chairman said that he felt that the village is looking untidy and this was made worse by the weeds throughout the Village. Cllr Willard said that there needed to be a balance between wildflowers and biodiversity with neat and trimmed green areas. He felt that the perception of how the area looks is important and it was necessary to explain which areas were being left and which were being cut regularly.

The Chairman said that HDC have created a wildflower area in Deer Park and there is a notice there but that this had lead to areas nearby also having wildflowers growing. Cllr Jones said that wildflower meadows rather than being areas that are just "left" do need management to make sure there are seeds of the right type to germinate and develop. She also said that where the crocus ribbon had been planted the grass around would need to be cut quite short before the crocuses bloom for them to show.

The Clerk said that one of the areas included in No Mow May at Parsonage Road had taken several cuts in June and careful management to return it to the neat grassed area it had previously been. He also thought that during a very dry spell it might be a fire hazard. The OM said that long grass near the edges of Verges was a safety hazard for drivers.

The Chairman commented that leaving the grass being uncut regularly enable weeds such as dandelions to take over and smother grass Cllr. Willard said that he thought that the Working Group were going to create a strategy for verges and once agreed this could be explained to locals. The Clerk said it might be something to discuss at the Annual Parish Meeting.

The Chairman said that there were complaints from locals either way, some residents liking the wildflower areas and some not.

Cllr Leader said that any strategy agreed upon could be changed in subsequent years if so desired.

The Committee were not in favour of the grass verges at Wantley Hill being a CRV and wanted the grass cut regularly. They felt that planting of crocuses would be welcomed.

They were also not in favour of a hedge being planted in this area

They would like to see the CRV at Manor Way removed and changed back to the grass being cut regularly as it did not enhance the entrance to the Village and the Office had complaints as to visibility to motorist.

They were in favour of wildflower areas being found around the Village on Parish owned land

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ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING AT FABIANS WAY

The Chairman said that he was unhappy with which areas had been selected for car charging in Fabians Way and the Clerk said that even though the Parish Council had expressed serious concerns about the choice, WSCC had ignored those concerns and gone ahead with the plan to install the chargers and had not informed the Parish Council in advance. He was worried that their other choice of Church Street may also go ahead against the wishes of the Parish Council.

Cllr Kendall wondered whether WSCC had a long term plan and if so it would be helpful to understand what that was.

It was agreed that the Clerk would prepare a letter to be sent from the Chairman to WSCC.

ACTION POINT: The Clerk agreed to prepare a letter from the Chairman to send to WSCC when he returned from holiday.

11.

IMPROVED BUS SERVICE

Cllr Leader said that although it was great news for Henfield to have the restored Bus Service she was conscious that Partridge Green were not so lucky and she wondered whether the Parish Council should sign the petition, she agreed to send the Clerk details of the Petition. The Chairman hoped that it would be well used in order to continue running, he also felt that it needed time to settle in. Cllr Willard had used the evening service to Brighton and it had worked very well.

Cllr Leader said she had read that transport and travel was being devolved to local areas and wondered whether that meant HPC or HDC or WSCC. She said that there was a problem in being able to travel between east and west in the county although services between north and south seem to be adequate. It was agreed that Cllr Sarah Payne would be contacted and HPC's help would be offered.

It was further agreed that this would be discussed at the next meeting when the new bus service will have been running for a month.

ACTION POINT: The OM agreed to ensure that this was on the next agenda.

12. **REMEMBRANCE AND VE DAY CELEBRATIONS**

The Chairman confirmed that a planning meeting had been booked for 24th September for this year's Remembrance Commemorations.

The Chairman also said that he hoped that the Village would want to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of VE Day on 8th May 2025 but that this could be discussed at a later date.

13. **PUBLIC CONVENIENCES**

The Clerk said as there were no longer the problems that had been happening in the past that maybe this could be taken off future agendas and this was agreed by all.

14. **CEMETERY**

1. Consider work to raised circular beds – The Chairman said that he thought it would be helpful to have a meeting at the Cemetery to see the work already carried out by the Community Payback Team (CPB Team), it was agreed that this should take place at 11am on Friday 4th October at the Cemetery.

ACTION POINT: OM to notify the rest of the Committee of this time and date.

The OM said that the Works Team had noticed that someone had arranged some flowers and stones around the plaque for the infant graves at edge of the cemetery, and she wondered whether it might be suitable to create a surround of kerb stones outlining the plaque. It was agreed that this could be looked at when visiting the cemetery next month.

15. **STREET SCENE**

1. Consider quotation for brick surround to Indian Bean Tree – Cllr Leader questioned whether the tree would survive if a wall was built around it. The Chairman said that the idea had been to have a layer of grey slate under the tree but that this would need to be contained by a small wall. The quote was considered too expensive to go ahead with this work.
2. Consider any possible further works in the Village Square – The Chairman asked if anyone had any other ideas for creating a more attractive setting at the Village Square and it was agreed to carry this forward to the next meeting. The OM showed a photograph of the raised bed next to the Laundrette by the Village Square.

ACTION POINT: The OM would ensure this was on the next agenda. .

3. Weed growth in gutters – The Chairman said that the state of many of the gutters at the edge of roads were very untidy and full of weeds especially in Broomfield Road. The OM agreed to ask CPB Team if they would work on road edge. Cllr Leader wondered whether residents could assist with clearing away the weeds. Cllr Jones said that HPC had decided not to use weedkiller but she did not think that residents could be expected to carry out weed removal.

ACTION POINT: The OM would liaise with CPB Team about whether they could carry out this sort of work.

The Chairman said that he was aware that the hedge in Furners Mead at the back of Coopers Way car park was very overgrown and he thought that HDC should be informed.

ACTION POINT: The PA would log this query with WSCC's website.

16. **CLERK'S REPORT**

1. Financial update – The clerk said that expenditure for this Committee was 52.9% of budget and that 41.7% of the year has elapsed. However £7,598 of this was for the purchase of the Christmas Lights and that if this was taken out the overall expenditure is 40.9% which just inside the budget.

The Clerk said that income for the cemetery was 48.2% of Budget and that in September £700 had already been received and about to receive £500.

2. Any further updates – There were none.

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

There were none.

18. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 9th October at 10.30am

The Meeting closed at 11.53am.