



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

**Meeting of the Finance Risk & Change Governance Committee held on  
Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 10:30am in the Committee Room at The Henfield Hall.**

**Present:** Cllr J Jones (Chairman), E Goodyear, M Morgan, S Leader, J Potts and G Perry.

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

**MINUTES**

**1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

None.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Cllr Shaw

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**

Approved. Signed and dated by the Chairman.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Cemetery Lighting - Update.

The lighting heads have been returned to the contractor for them to fit the new drivers then arrange installation, although there is some doubt over whether this will be effective as the heads are badly corroded. However the contractor has given written assurance that the whole bollards will be replaced if the existing units do not function.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

**OPEN FORUM**

None.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

**5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**6. REVIEW THE MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME FOR HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. The figures have been updated in line with the Horsham District Council (HDC) scheme and there were no further changes. It was confirmed that six Councillors take the full amount of the allowance with one taking a lower amount.

It was all agreed to recommend the Members Allowance Scheme to Full Council in November.

**7. REVIEW THE BUSINESS PLAN**

A first draft of a new Business Plan for 2025/28 was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Goodyear stated that if any potential projects require funding in the next financial year, they will need to be included in the budget. There can then be further discussion on the new Business Plan in the New Year. The Chairman suggested that a review of the previous Business Plan is included when publishing the next. Cllr Morgan suggested that storage for Works Officers' equipment could be included as a project. Cllr Perry added replacement of the Rothery floodlights with LED and mentioned that the signage project may require funding next year.

**8. MOTION: TO APPROVE THE CCTV POLICY**

A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. It was confirmed that there have been no alterations to the policy as there have been no changes to legislation.

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Goodyear and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the CCTV policy.

9. **MOTION: TO APPROVE THE POLICY ON PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS WITH DEVELOPERS & LANDOWNERS.**

A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. It had been updated to reflect best practice. It was confirmed that the policy reflects and clarifies that in the vast majority of cases the Council would prefer to meet developers and landowners in a public forum, preferably within a normal Plans Advisory Committee meeting. Private meetings would only be arranged in exceptional circumstances, when the developer otherwise refuses to meet publicly and the Committee feels that it might be detrimental not to be fully informed. This would only apply to proposals for developments within the Neighbourhood Plan; there would be no private meetings with speculative developers under any circumstances. It was agreed that the policy should be on the Parish Council website.

It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Potts **AND VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the policy on pre-application meetings with developers.

**Action Point: The Operations Manager (OM) to add the policy to the website.**

10. **CONSIDER HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL'S 'YEAR' FOR 2025**

Following initial discussions at Full Council, a 'Year of Community Health and Wellbeing' was suggested. It was agreed to recommend this to Full Council in November. Suggestions included improving access to High Street shops and local facilities, potentially offering a reward to accessible places. It was agreed that this theme would fit well with the Haven's "Challenge Annie" fundraising plans. It was noted that there are lots of groups that may want to be involved and the Council could assist with facilitating and connecting people. It was suggested that each Committee includes this on their agendas in the New Year to consider how they might be able to contribute. It was noted that a logo will be needed and a good first step would be to identify groups and contacts. They could be invited to a launch event in the New Year. **It was agreed** to recommend the 'Year of Community Health and Wellbeing' to Full Council as a theme for 2025.

11. **CONSIDER RIVER LEVEL WARNING SIGNS FOR MOCK BRIDGE**

The Chair of Shermanbury Parish Council, Cllrs Goodyear, Grossmith and Morgan would be meeting shortly to discuss outline plans. A response from WSCC Highways is still awaited. It was confirmed that, if the project progresses, it would be allocated to the Village Amenities Committee.

12. **CONSIDER THE DRAFT 2025/26 BUDGETS, PRECEPT, PROVISIONS AND RESERVES**

A draft was circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk has already met with the Chairs of the Recreation and Open Spaces, Village Amenities and Children and Young People Committees. The next step will be to meet with this Committee's Chairman and the Chairman of Council to discuss the overall budget, to include provisions and projected income. All Committees will need to submit their final proposals by the end of November and the budget will be considered in the December meeting of this Committee, with a view to recommending to Full Council for approval in January. Information is still awaited on staff salaries. It was suggested to include a separate budget for Review of Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that the budget for Parish Office and Museum rent has decreased this year, because the current year's costs were over-estimated in last year's budget. It is proposed that Computing costs are increased because a new website is needed. Cllr Leader also recommended considering upgrading the Microsoft package to allow easier access and sharing of documents for staff and Councillors.

13. **CONSIDER FUTURE COMMITTEE STRUCTURES**

Cllr Morgan distributed an initial suggestion for a new Committee structure that would involve a return to one large Environment and Buildings Committee but with smaller sub-committees, such as for the Cemetery, which may only need to meet quarterly. This is because there are several areas that cause confusion and cross-over between committees such as verges, hedges, benches, bins, footpaths and signage. The Plans Advisory, Museum and Finance Committees would remain unchanged. It was agreed to allocate the January meeting of this Committee to a discussion about committee structure, the frequency of meetings for each, how many Councillors would be needed for each and how staff would be managed. Cllr Goodyear stated she would prefer not to have sub-committees but agreed the structure needs review with clear demarcation for each. Increased use of working groups was suggested in order to involve more members of the public. In the meantime, all Committee Chairs to give thought to potential proposals.

14. **SECTION 106 SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND ALLOCATION**

The recent unspent S106 schedule received from HDC showed the entirety of the sustainable transport funding has been allocated to an Active Travel proposal by WSCC. WSCC have not communicated or shared information about this, with Council or with St Peter's School, despite regular requests for information over the past eighteen months. WSCC have only stated that designers are currently working on a plan and further information will be available in February. It was agreed to request a meeting with WSCC Cllr Sarah Payne to discuss further.

**Action Point: The Clerk to request a meeting with Cllr Sarah Payne.**

15. **ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINT INSTALLATION IN HENFIELD**

The Clerk explained that, despite assurances to the contrary by WSCC, white lines stating 'electric vehicles only' have been painted on Fabians Way. WSCC have admitted this was contractor error and was done without a Traffic Regulation Order, which is a legal requirement for this work. They have said they are working towards a resolution but in the meantime it was agreed that residents of Fabians Way and visitors to Upper Mead need to be informed that they can still park on the road as usual.

**Action Point: The Clerk to arrange a leaflet drop to Fabians Way residents.**

16. **FINANCE**

- a) Confirmation of Reconciliation of Bank Accounts (September).  
Each signed and dated by two Councillors.
- b) Internal Controls (To Include Audit Check of Expenditure) – (July, August and September).  
Each signed and dated by two Councillors.
- c) Approve a £750 Grant to the Henfield Community Partnership.  
This has been budgeted for. It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Morgan and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to approve the £750 grant to Henfield Community Partnership.
- d) Consider the Cyber Insurance Quotation of £347.20 from Coalition Risk Solutions Ltd.  
The price for renewal with the same provider has dropped slightly from last year. It was all agreed that it is necessary to have the cover. It was **PROPOSED** by the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Perry and **VOTED ALL IN FAVOUR** to accept the cyber insurance renewal quotation.

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

The Clerk advised that one of the Works Officers has asked to reduce his hours from four mornings a week to three. One of the other Works Officers would like to take the available hours. This will be on the agenda for the November meeting. Cllr Perry suggested taking on an apprentice Works Officer.

The OM raised that it has recently come to light that the Parish Council are £6610 in credit with Community Transport Sussex (CTS) for minibus trips. However, as CTS have recently significantly reduced their services and made some staff redundant, it is felt unlikely that they will be able to honour this credit. The Council will need to consider whether to allocate a further grant next financial year. CTS have also requested additional funding for the Electric Car Club, which is under threat of closure, as their initial funding was only for one year. It was agreed that further information on their running costs and financial projections would be required in order to consider further at the next meeting.

**Action Point: The Clerk to request further information from CTS.**

18. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

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

**Meeting Closed at 12.11pm.**