



HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
Meeting of Recreation & Open Spaces Committee held on
Wednesday 23rd October 2024 at 10.00am in the Henfield Hall

Present: Cllr G Perry (Chairman), R Kendall, F Ayres, D Grossmith, D Jemmett and C Simmonds.

In Attendance: Mr R MacDonald (Horsham District Council – HDC) Mr J Willis (Tree Warden), 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 Cllr A May.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 25th SEPTEMBER 2024

These were approved subject to the amendment that the member of the public confirmed that they were the sole owners of that section of the Lane. They were signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

- 1 Terms of Reference – The Chairman confirmed that the ToR would be agreed by FRC and that a meeting would be organised in January. Cllr Goodyear said that it was hoped that each committee's responsibilities did not overlap and that workloads were relatively equal and that each committee was aware for which areas it was responsible. The Chairman said that there had been a suggestion that Working Groups may be used to look at projects and that meetings are well spread throughout each month.
- 2 Local Gin Company and collection of Sloes – The Clerk confirmed that this company had said that they were collecting sloes were from a friend's land and not council land.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

The Chairman welcomed Rob MacDonald to the meeting. She also said by way of background that a tour of Henfield's Playing Fields, Play Grounds and Open Spaces had taken place last year with Parish Councillors, the Clerk and Mr MacDonald's predecessor but that nothing further had come from this gathering of information. Mr MacDonald stated that he had joined HDC earlier in the year and that his background had previously been with The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA). He said that his area of work was Leisure and that HDC had four Leisure Centres at Steyning, Horsham, Billingshurst and Broadbridge Heath and that one of his priorities was to update strategies for these Leisure Centres. His role was to take a holistic approach to health and wellbeing across the whole district. He was aware of one major problem being football pitch drainage.

Cllr Goodyear said she believed that a map was produced from the tour and the Clerk said that he had prepared some pointers.

ACTION POINT: It was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr Goodyear would ensure that this Committee and CYP committee had copies of the map and points from the meeting before their next meeting. It was agreed that these documents would be shared with Mr MacDonald once agreed by the Committees involved.

Mr MacDonald said that he was trying to establish what was wanted on needed by Stakeholders by going and meeting those people responsible in parishes and towns along with members of the Sports Development team at HDC. He confirmed that he hoped that Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money could then be used to fund projects. He said that he also hoped to involve other organisations such as the Football Association (FA) He said that they were looking at all ages although he agreed that core leisure centre membership seemed to be 20-50years. He said he would be looking at other activities and sports, not just leisure centres.

The Chairman said that there had sometimes been problems in that the office did not have the expertise to know what was required with playing fields for instance and would welcome expert opinion on the right course of action to improve quality of playing surfaces. Mr MacDonald said he would be very happy to help and also to pass on the contacts at FA and other bodies. He said that he was aware of projects within the district where the FA had assisted with finding funding to improve pitch drainage and facilities in the clubhouse. He was aware of 20 of these sorts of projects nationally. The FA had called this the Home Advantage Program.

The Chairman said that some local facilities are no longer as popular as previously such as squash and newer

sports like Padel Tennis were taking off. Mr MacDonald agreed that this is where it was very important that decisions are made locally for what is actually wanted. He said it would be helpful to know what challenges are faced in Henfield and what future plans were envisioned. The Chairman said that she believed that the HDC were looking at fair play and fully accessible facilities for all. The Chairman thanked Mr MacDonald for his time.

Mr MacDonald left the meeting at 10.25am.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

6. PLAYING FIELDS

- 1 Wantley Field Licence – The Chairman confirmed that WSCC legal department were working on the wording for signage to be erected at Wantley Field.
- 2 Meeting with HDC about playing field strategy – This was covered in the Open Forum.

7. HENFIELD FOOTBALL CLUB

- 1 To consider a request to use matting and shingle near Eric Holder pavilion for the storage of goals – The Chairman said that it was difficult to know the space that was being requested. Cllr Grossmith said that in order to lay matting and shingle that about 4 inches of soil would need to be removed to make the ground level and that the shingle would migrate from this area and may damage the Contractors Mowers. He suggested that the Contractors could be asked to move the goals when they cut the grass and PA suggested that the goals could be left on one side of the pavilion for a month and then moved to the other side the following month if there was room. The Clerk said that as the land was in trust that the Trustees would need to make any decision on changing the area from grass. The OM said that she knew this to be the only shaded area on the Kings Field for younger children and this might prevent them from being able to use it.

The Chairman said that more information would be needed from HFC with a clear plan/map to indicate size of area and a discussion with the contractors about moving the goals.

8. HENFIELD CRICKET CLUB

- 1 To consider repairs/renovation to Cricket Club car park – The Chairman confirmed that three years ago it had been agreed that HPC would fund 75% of this work with HCC funding the remaining 25%. The Clerk said that up-to-date quotes would be required but that this could only be undertaken once HCC had confirmed that they were in a position to fund their 25% of what might be £15,000 to £30,000 for the full project.

OM confirmed that this project was on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

Cllr Grossmith said that although tarmac is hard wearing, it is expensive, does not look very "rural" and would require planning permission. It was agreed that Cllr Jemmett would speak with HCC Committee to establish that they were aware of these details and had funding available.

ACTION POINT: Cllr Jemmett would relay this information to HCC and feedback to this committee that they had the funding available for their share of the costs.

9. TREE WORK.

- 1 Quote for survey from Gale Tree Consultancy – To propose to accept the quote from Gale Tree Consultancy for 2025 Tree Survey at £1,500.00 plus VAT – It was confirmed that this consultancy would look at each tree, but only make recommendations on those requiring work or looking at again within three months, 12 months or 36 months. Mr Willis said that he thought it would be useful to have photos of the trees so that any changes could be recorded and monitored. The Chairman said that this seemed a very sensible approach and that they should be asked about this.

It was PROPOSED by THE CHAIRMAN, SECONDED by CLLR KENDALL and AGREED ALL IN FAVOUR TO ACCEPT the quotation from Gale Tree Consultancy for the Three-Year Tree Survey at £1,500.00 +VAT.

ACTION POINT: PA to liaise with consultant about photographing trees and the timing of the survey next Spring.

- 2 Elm Trees near and around the Rothery Field – It was confirmed that this work has been scheduled for when the need for cutting grass has reduced.
- 3 Trees for the Kings Field – The Chairman confirmed that these trees had already been purchased but were on hold with supplier, but a date for planting them was needed. The Tree Officers, volunteers and Works Team would need to liaise over a suitable date. Mr Willis said that tree supports could also be purchased

from the same company to ensure the trees were protected whilst developing. He also said that care would be needed when strimming near them and that it would be better to leave the grass longer around the base rather than damage the trunks. The Clerk confirmed that there was money in reserves to purchase Tree Supports and protection. OM asked if there were implications for grass cutting and the Chairman said that they would be planted far enough from each other for mowers to get between them but agreed that strimming to close should be avoided.

10. COMMUNITY ORCHARD

- 1 Purchase of fruit tree for Orchard – Mr Willis said that he had yet to select a tree but would do so soon.
- 2 Bench for the Orchard – The Chairman said that the Works Team had done a great job in the Community Orchard and it was looking lovely and that the new bench which had been purchased by an ex-Councillor had been placed there and was a welcome place to sit. She was pleased that the cost of the Works Officer's time had been met by the Parish Council.

11. YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

- 1 Daffodil Bulbs – The Chairman said that these had arrived but that she thought more might be needed to plant in Manor Way as well as the Rothery Field.
- 2 Biodiversity Exhibition 9th December 6.30-8.30pm in the Garden Room, The Chairman said that all were welcome. She also said that there was a Fungi walk at 12.15pm on 15th November meeting in the Churchyard.

Cllr Kendall left the meeting at 11am.

- 3 Youth project – The Chairman confirmed that Tuesday 29th October was the date for the bulb planting project at the Rothery Field, she believed that invitations had been sent to St Peter's School as well as two others nearby. An I-Spay nature book would be given to any young person helping.

12. VERGES

- 1 To receive an update from Verge Management Working Group – The Chairman said that it was hoped that just one more meeting would be needed. She was hoping to prepare a proposal for Full Council to review in December.

13. TRAILS AND SAFE ROUTES

- 1 Henfield Trails – It was confirmed that the map project is ongoing. The Chairman said that Steyning Parish Council had contacted her about a potential safe cycle route along the Downs link and into Henfield. She said that a Small Dole resident and keen cyclist was in touch with them.
- 2 Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) Craggits Lane and Bishop Close – The Chairman confirmed that Cllr Morgan is following up on land ownership. She re-iterated the value of keeping this access open.

14. BUDGETS

To discuss the Budget for 2025-2026 - The Clerk circulated the first draft of budgets for next year. He said that Playing Field Maintenance and Rothery budgets were reduced from last year as HFC have taken on their care and maintenance. He confirmed that the Wantley Field was cut twice a year, that the rent was £120 per year and that the signs would need to be purchased when the wording had been agreed. He said that the Trees Budget was increased to take account of the need for the Tree Survey and so was Works Officer Equipment as much of the machinery would require maintenance. He said that Nature Recovery and Support was reduced as it had been increased for 2024 being the Year of Biodiversity. He confirmed that the Tanyard is looked after by HDC. He said that any hedge trimming carried out by the Works Team was not included in this budget. He said that the Trails and Footpaths budget is for developing work and not maintenance.

Cllr Goodyear confirmed that the budget for Signage was £6,000 and this was looked after by FRC. The Clerk said that the provisions had combined Trails, Safe Routes, Footpaths and Bridleways. The Clerk stated that this Committee will need to finalise next month and then it would be agreed by FRC in December. Cllr Goodyear said she was aware that Cllr Morgan was keen for the purchase of a storage facility for Works Team but she believed that storage with good security and CCTV was preferable which could only be supplied by a contractor.

15. BUSINESS PLAN

Cllr Goodyear said that the Business Plan was up for renewal next year and recommended that if there were projects that might be completed within the first year they needed to be budgeted for as well as added to the Business Plan. The Chairman said that the following were suggestions from various meetings: -

- 1 Veteran Tree Mapping – The Chairman said that this project was not expensive and was being adopted by a number of other councils who have asked volunteers to assist. She stressed that this would ensure that

developers were aware of the value of these trees in our area.

- 2 Outdoor Gym – The Chairman said that this had been raised a year or more earlier by a resident and was now being discussed with CYP for adults as well as young. She explained that the Leisure Centre had objected to the provision of an outdoor gym nearby, Cllr Grossmith agreed to ask the Leisure centre again as he felt that it might encourage more members at the Leisure Centre during the winter months and it would be preferable to have it more central. Cllr Goodyear said that an indication of costs were needed. OM said that quite simple equipment such as Monkey Bars would be popular with teenagers and not a great cost. The Chairman said she would investigate costs.
- 3 Rothery Pavilion and Field – LED lighting – The Chairman said that this would be a project further into the future and after discussion with HFC rather than next year with a wish to change more lighting to LED.

16. WORKS TEAM

The Chairman said that the Works Team had flailed the Orchard before placing the bench. They had also been asked to look at a number of footpaths which had been passable with difficulty because of the growth of the hedges at the sides.

17. CLERKS REPORT

The Clerk said that by the end of September 50% of the financial year had elapsed but that only 35% of budget had been spent. He said that the Rothery Costs had reduced with the cessation of the cleaner earlier in the year. He said all other costs were in line with expectation. The Chairman said that there was still £27,000 in provisions for playing field maintenance if needed. He said that Sport England had not approached the Council.

18. CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

19. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

There was none.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

27th November 2024.

It was agreed that PA would investigate which other times or rooms might be available for this meeting next year.

The meeting closed at 11.34am.