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

**Meeting of the Finance Risk & Change Governance Committee held on**

**Wednesday 15th January 2025 at 10:30am in the Committee Room at The Henfield Hall.**

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

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

**MINUTES**

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS’ INTERESTS**

None.

1. **APOLOGIES**

None.

1. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18th DECEMBER 2024**

Approved. Signed and dated by the Chairman.

1. **MATTERS ARISING**
2. Cemetery Lighting - Update.

Cllr Grosssmith has taken the file and has contacted the supplier as he wants to establish what the installation instructions were for the lights and whether they were followed correctly by the installer. He will then write a report.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

**OPEN FORUM**

Cllr stated she was interested in the terms of reference discussion.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

1. **CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

1. **CONSIDER THE REPLACEMENT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL VAN**

The Clerk explained that the current van had recently needed two injectors replaced at a cost of £1100 and that the MOT and service this year had cost £640, as well as repairs to the trailer of £840. So far this year a total of £4244 has been spent on the Council van against a budget of £2200. There is £12,385 in reserve with further provision of £5000 for next year. It was generally agreed that the Council ought to consider purchase of a replacement van. Cllr Perry reminded the Committee of the pledge in the Carbon Reduction Plan to purchase an electric vehicle. Various factors such as full electric, hybrid vehicles, leasing and availability of electric charging points were briefly discussed. It was resolved to form a small group to draw up a list of considerations and specifications. Cllrs Goodyear and Shaw volunteered to be involved. The OM will arrange a meeting to discuss and also invite a works officer.

**Action Point: The OM to arrange a meeting to discuss as above.**

1. **CONSIDER THE COMMITTEE STRUCTURES & CURRENT TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The current terms of reference was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Morgan stated that he would prefer to see a return to one large Committee rather that separate Village Amenities (VAC) and Recreation and Open Spaces (ROS) that could perhaps meet every other month. This could help to resolve where there are cross over issues such as verges, trees in the centre of the village and benches. This committee could be responsible for Remembrance and the Children and Young People Committee (CYP) could take on responsibility for Playing Fields. Cllr Perry acknowledged that often ROS meetings can consist of a lot of updates with few decisions being required, therefore could be condensed. Cllr Perry suggested keeping VAC, having a separate Playing Fields Committee that meets twice a year and a separate Nature Recovery Committee. Cllr Shaw commented that with one large committee, this may free up Councillors to sit on Plans Advisory (PAC), and CYP which both occasionally struggle to be quorate. The Joint Commons Committee also still requires one further Councillor. Cllr Goodyear commented that it is important to consider Councillors work load and consideration needs to be given to spreading the number of meetings fairly. It was also noted that most Councils of a comparable size have less Committees than Henfield. It was agreed to form a group to discuss further with a view to reporting progress at the next meeting then a proposal for Full Council by March or April. It was also agreed that it is likely that PAC, CYP and the Museum Committees would be unchanged.

**Action Point: The OM to arrange a meeting with Cllr Morgan, Cllr Perry, Cllr Goodyear and Cllr Shaw as well as office staff to discuss further. Cllr Morgan will circulate the information of the structure of other local comparable sized Parish Councils.**

1. **THE 2025 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ON TUESDAY 4TH MARCH**

Topics will include the Year of Care and Wellbeing and the conclusion of the Year of Biodiversity. A speaker from the Henfield Community Partnership has been invited to speak on wellbeing and Sussex Police have also been invited to speak. Cllr Goodyear suggested that there is still a formal presentation element as well as a question and answer session in the meeting (as it is a statutory obligation) but as a slight change on previous years to have more in the way of interactive displays and stands around the Hall with a Councillor on each in order to chat and discuss with residents. It is hoped that by also offering refreshments that more people may attend and be encouraged to stay longer. The OM confirmed that she and the Parish Administrator would be willing to organise this alongside Cllr Ayres who had volunteered to help previously. Cllr Leader also suggested Scouts or the Youth Club could help, she will make contact with these groups to enquire. The meeting will be promoted in local magazines as well as on social media. All Chairman of Committees were reminded to write their annual reports.

1. **FINANCE**
2. Confirmation of Reconciliation of Bank Accounts (December).

Each signed and dated by two Councillors.

1. Internal Controls (To Include Audit Check of Expenditure) – (December).

Each signed and dated by two Councillors.

The Clerk reported that a budget had been set anticipating interest this year of £3500, but in fact so far this year the Council has received £9200. The budget set for next year is £8100. It was agreed to discuss the possibility of reinstating Community Grants at the end of this financial year.

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

The Chairman confirmed that the idea of a suggestion box would be on the agenda for the next meeting. Cllr Goodyear also requested that the Business Plan is also put on the next agenda. Cllr Morgan reported that the flooring is due to be fitted shortly in the new Scout building. A recent claim for Gift Aid had enabled the project to move forward.

1. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

19th February 2025.

**Meeting Closed at 11.28am.**