



HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting of Henfield Parish Council held on Tuesday 4th February 2025 at 7.00pm in The Henfield Hall.

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

In attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager) and one member of the public.

MINUTES

1. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

None.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr Sarah Payne – West Sussex County Council (WSSCC).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 7th JANUARY 2025**

Approved. Signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman asked that all Annual Reports are received by the 14th of February. She also added that Jane Eaton and Martin Boffey from Horsham District Council (HDC) have requested to join the 11th March meeting to discuss implications of devolution. They have asked to speak and will also answer questions. Councillors from neighbouring parish's will also be invited to attend.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

The member of the public declined the opportunity to speak.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting.

6. **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT**

None received.

7. **HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Perry reported that HDC Councillors have been briefed on the possibilities and implications of devolution, including possible impacts on staff and for upcoming local elections. An update on the Local Plan is still awaited. Refurbishment of the Capitol Theatre in Horsham has been paused but the pantomime will go ahead next year. There has been recent discussion on parking vouchers for use in car parks. Councillors have attended cyber security training which emphasised door security for offices. The River Recovery Declaration is shortly to be adopted. Grampian conditions have been accepted as suitable to mitigate water neutrality. There will be two additional planning meetings.

8. **MOTION: TO CONSIDER CO-OPTING A COUNCILLOR FROM THE APPLICATIONS RECENTLY RECEIVED**

Completed application forms for two candidates were circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk explained that there must be an absolute majority, therefore a minimum of seven votes for the successful candidate as there are thirteen Councillors present. He added that Councillors can choose not to vote for either candidate. Voting slips were distributed, results were counted and checked by the Clerk assisted by the Operations Manager. **Mr Mark Andrews was duly co-opted as Councillor for the Henfield ward.**

9. **HENFIELD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 4th MARCH 2025**

This was recently discussed by the Finance, Risk and Change Committee (FRC) who suggested that the format of the meeting could take a more informal and interactive approach. There will be presentations and a question and answer session as usual, but residents will also be offered tea, coffee or wine and encouraged to stay behind to look at displays and chat with Councillors. It was all agreed to proceed on this basis.

10. **UPDATE FROM THE SIGNAGE WORKING GROUP**

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr May highlighted that signage for the Kings Field is considered a priority with hopes to roll out to other playing fields, open spaces and play areas in future. As well as a welcoming header stating the name of the location, content on the signs might include details on other facilities in the immediate locality, history of the site, ownership and reporting information. Views will be sought from local residents at the Annual Parish Meeting. Feedback from local sports clubs has indicated that visitors find it difficult to be sure where to go and whether they are in the right place when they arrive. In locations where there is more than one entrance, the best location would be chosen. Final decision on wording will be for individual committees to decide. Indicative quotes suggest the likely cost for a robust long lasting metal sign would be in the region of £5,000 to £6,000, not including installation costs. Concerns were raised as to whether this would represent good value for money, particularly when most people have a smartphone and can use satnav. Other suggestions included keeping wording to a minimum, keeping signs as simple as possible such as to just to mark the location, to use QR codes to ensure signs have longevity and to contact the local blacksmith as a potentially cheaper option. It was noted that the sign with a map on the Village Square would also benefit from being updated. This belongs to HDC and was arranged with Henfield Community Partnership (HCP). It was also noted that it might be possible to use funding from the Kings Field Trust for Kings Field signage, although there is no funding available from the George Rothery Trust.

11. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

Cllr Jones highlighted that the Committee is in discussion on the purchase of an electric van for the works team as the current van is now requiring expensive repairs. The Committee has also discussed Terms of Reference and will be reporting on that at their next meeting on the 19th February. Cllr May asked for clarification on the FRC miscellaneous budget. The Clerk explained that excess expenditure over budget will be taken from General Reserves or Allocated Reserves as part of the year end process.

(a) Summary of £27,381.35 Expenditure from 1st January to 31st January 2025.
Noted by Council.

(b) Select Expenditure as the Monthly Random Audit Check – January.
Cllr Grossmith selected BNP Paribas - £279.90.

(B) **Plans Advisory**

Cllr Shaw reported that most of the recent meeting was taken up with discussion on the Croudace application for 191 homes. It was noted that the application at Southview Terrace has gone to appeal and this will be mentioned at the meeting this week. The Committee has already taken a view on this but will consider whether to make further representation.

(a) Local Plan Update.
Cllr Shaw attended a recent update meeting and will summarise on email for Councillors. It was noted that the outcome of the meeting was concerning.

(C) **Recreation & Open Spaces**

Cllr Perry reported that the Committee will be discussing sub-letting of playing fields and have recently paid for servicing of the tractor unit.

(D) Village Amenities

(a) Mock Bridge Flooding Signage.

Cllr Morgan reported on a recent meeting to discuss flood warning signage for Mock Bridge attended by WSCC, Shermanbury Parish Council and a potential contractor. The initial suggestion is to position signs at the Crouch Hill and Partridge Green junctions to allow vehicles to take a diversion when the road is flooded. A quotation for the signage is awaited.

(E) Children & Young People

Cllr Leader reported that a preliminary design for skate park improvements, factoring in the available budget has been commissioned. Quotes will then be sought.

(F) Museum

It was noted that the Committee meet later this month.

(G) Joint Commons

Cllr Perry reported that the hedge laying is complete at the Tanyard and some bramble has been cleared. There will be a considerable amount of trees with Ash Die Back removed by HDC contractors on the Common week beginning the 10th February. Heavy machinery will be in use. Access will not be prevented. HDC will be asked to install signage on site and banksmen will direct members of the public. Details will also be shared on Facebook.

12. **REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Leader reported that there was a well-attended meeting hosted by HCP to discuss the Year of Care and Wellbeing and that current provision and ideas for the future were considered. Plans might include monthly wellbeing events and workshops. Red Oaks have offered to host.

Cllr Grossmith reported that construction of the Padel courts is going well and they are on course to open at the end of February.

13. **PCSO & POLICE ACTIVITIES**

The Clerk reported that Sussex Police have focus and engagement months in different locations and February will be Henfield. There will be additional patrols and targeted activity in key areas. They also plan to have a stall at the Monday market on 17th in order to engage with residents.

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

None.

15. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 11th March 2025.

Meeting Closed at 7.48pm.